FIRST THINGS

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THE PATTERN OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH
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THE NEW FUSIONISM
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June/July 2005 • Number 154 • $4.25/$5.25 Canada

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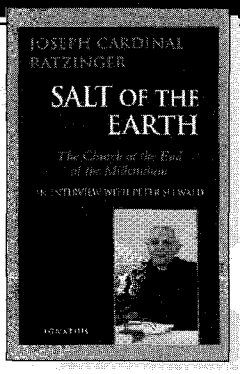
POPE BENEDICT XVI

JOSEPH CARDINAL RATZINGER



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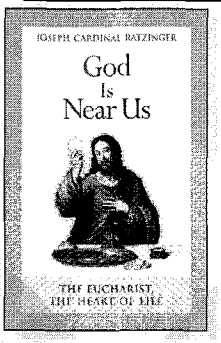

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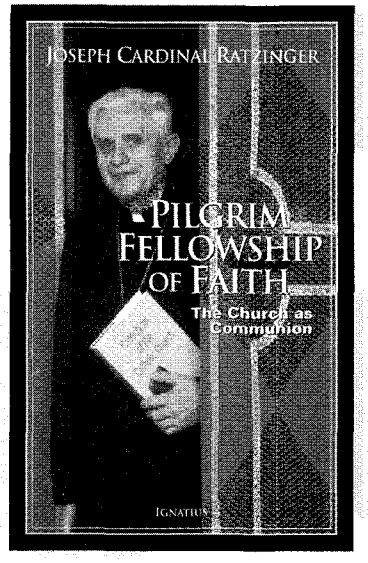

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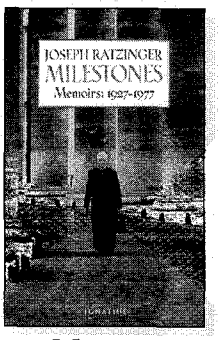

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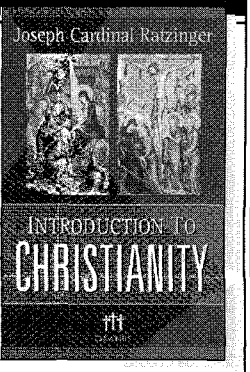

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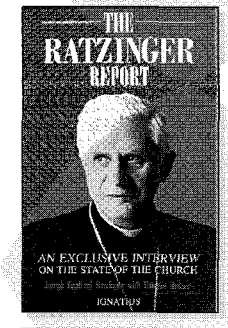

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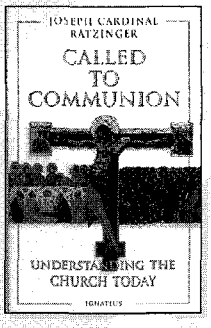

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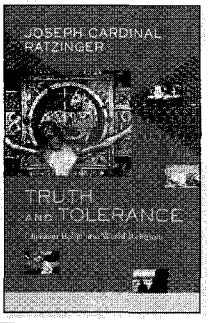

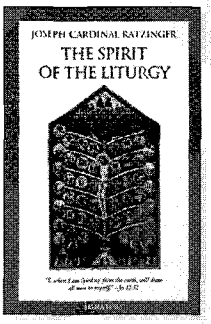

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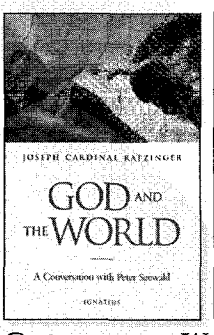

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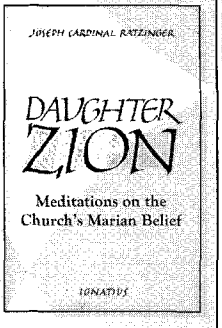

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First Things (ISSN #1047-5141) is published monthly (except for combined issues June/July and August/September) for $34 per year ($14.97 for students) by the Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: send address changes to First Things, P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Editorial Offices:** The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. **Editorial Phone:** (212) 627-1985. **Email:** ft@firstthings.com. **Website:** http://www.firstthings.com. **Advertising Offices:** 129 Phelps Avenue, Suite 312, Rockford, IL 61108. **Advertising Phone:** (815) 398-8569. **Email:** firstthingsadsales@pma-inc.net. **Subscription Department:** P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Subscription Phone:** (877) 905-9920. **Email:** frth@kable.com. Unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., One Media Way, 12406 Rt. 250, Milan, OH 44846. Copyright © 2005 by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. All rights reserved. Produced in the USA.

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The Science of the Mind

It was good to read Paul C. Vitz's article about "psychology in recovery" (March 2005). Important things are going on today in psychology, and the positive psychology movement is a breath of fresh air.

I do take exception, however, to a few of Dr. Vitz's arguments. Are neurosciences really the "hard" sciences Dr. Vitz makes them out to be? From a purely organic point of view, and using the current computer metaphor, scientists do not understand memory, cognition, or the mind. Though the brain might be "harder" than the mind, does Dr. Vitz suggest that the probing and prodding of something tangible like the brain is somehow an improvement?

Dr. Vitz makes another curious assertion when he says the discipline of psychology has become more modest because of the new successes of psychiatry and the biological sciences. He bases this argument on the fact that "today people suffering from depression, obsessions, and many other psychological problems take medication, which tends to be more effective, immediate, and cheaper than long-term therapy."

Such an argument, however, is clearly not based on the facts, at least as one might gauge them from recent medical journals. There is the ongoing controversy about the effectiveness of medications when compared to active placebos. Moreover, many forms of psychosocial therapy, including cognitive behavioral therapy, have been found in many cases to be as, or more, effective than pharmacological therapies.

And then there are all those nasty side effects. If anything, the true effectiveness of biopsychiatry has been in convincing us that we should take seriously and invest billions in what amounts to a very dubious program.

What is more worrying, though, is the disease-mongering encroachment of biopsychiatry into the realm of problems of living. Pharmaceutical companies and biopsychiatry have been attempting to seduce us with the notion that there is a magic pill for whatever ails the human body or mind. The modest effectiveness and the harmful side effects of most of these "lifestyle medications" leave little doubt that such a strategy will be deleterious to individuals. And the social costs to civil society will also be immense, as more and more problems of living are interpreted as being "caused" by genetic, organic, chemical, or physiological dysfunctions—rather than by the loss of self-discipline and the virtues rediscovered by positive psychology. The victim mentality, which seems to be one of the pernicious side effects of radical individualism, is fueled by a biopsychiatry that provides new "scientific" reasons for irresponsibility.

This new positive psychology does not seem to be the reaction of a field trying to reestablish legitimacy in the face of the "triumphs" of biopsychiatry but rather an offensive against perversions associated with the ever-expanding influence of the medical-curative paradigm. If anything, positive psychology is a welcome tonic against the tiresome claims of the field of psychopathology. It will be particularly salutary because it allows us to discourse again about self-discipline, self-mastery, and maybe even the exercise of the will.

Raymond Lemay
Executive Director
Services to Children and Adults
Plantagenet, Ontario

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Paul C. Vitz replies:
I appreciate Mr. Lemay's challenges to my portrayal of contemporary psychology. But neuroscience does seem to be a "hard science": it uses traditional scientific methods such as measuring change in electrical potential, its genuine findings can be replicated, and it shows systematic development over time. Like most scientific disciplines, neuroscience has its serious controversies over how to understand many of its findings. But this does not invalidate its scientific status.

Still, as I noted, the scientific character of neuroscience does *not* mean that the theoretical interpretations of the mind proposed by various neuroscientists are equally valid. It is well known that such interpretations commonly involve various philosophical assumptions, the truth of which lies outside science.

I believe one important reason for the more humble attitude of contemporary psychology has been the growth of biological applications to mental illness—which is to say, medications. Try to recall the dominance of psychological interpretations in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In those years, obsessive-compulsive disorder and autism were still commonly seen as psychological in origin—and thus treated almost exclusively by psychotherapy. (Obsessive-compulsive disorder was viewed by many as a result of early toilet training procedures, and autism as the result of some failure of mothering.) I can remember when everything from allergies and asthma to migraine headaches was routinely interpreted as psychological in origin. We now know that many such conditions are biological in origin.

Mr. Lemay raises the issue of the recent over-extension of the biological model. Here I agree with him wholeheartedly. Psychology has likely retreated too far, and prescription of psychological medications shows signs of overuse. Many negative side-effects have already been identified; others will no doubt emerge in the future. One important psychological side effect—mentioned by Mr. Lemay—is the loss of personal responsibility that results from seeing all of life's problems as occasions for a biological fix. Here we are in agreement that the "new" positive psychology is an encouraging sign of a return to an appreciation of the importance of self-discipline and responsibility through an emphasis on the virtues.

Disaster and the Divine

David B. Hart has missed the mark with his short apologetic, "Tsunami and Theodicy" (March 2005). Not only does he wash his hands of the offense of evil in this world, but to avoid the implications of Providence, he also skips from answering the problem of evil to eschatological sentiments about Jesus wiping the tears from the eyes of Dostoyevsky's excrement-eating girl. The effect is unsatisfactory.

"Suffering and death, considered in themselves, have no ultimate meaning at all," Hart says. But only a Platonist could consider these things "in themselves." All suffering and death are part of a narrative—in fact, *the* Narrative. Without the story, they are nothing—like a hole in a shirt, without the shirt to surround it. And although they are in themselves nothing, and as such can benefit no one, when played out in the drama of Creation, Fall, and Redemption, they can facilitate goodness, beauty, and truth. Everywhere Easter emerges from Good Friday.

Hart is skeptical that others will profit from the demise of the tsunami victims. And certainly the benefit of others does not justify the evil of the loss. But won't others benefit? Aren't they already? Certainly acts of benevolence are now being visited on countries previously forgotten by the West. Food, shelter, care, medi-

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cine, prayer, infrastructure-building, and hope are all being helicoptered into Asia and Africa. A megaphone has sounded for their blessing. No eternal harmony necessitated the tsunami suffering, but God can take the chromatic noise of suffering and make a melody.

And what about us? Hart says, "our position is charity," which is true. Charity is needed precisely because there is evil in the world. Provision must have been made within fallen Creation for us also to make melodies of the poor scales of suffering: to co-create goodness from them.

Naturally, Hart disagrees with Aquinas that all things will be justified in an ultimate synthesis, yet he never declares what will be done about all this suffering and death. If it has "no ultimate meaning," then nothing needs to be justified. However, if it has ultimate existential significance, and cannot with a clear conscience be reconciled with a good God, then what could be done? Jesus can take away the girl's tears, but what about her former suffering? Hart never steps forward to answer this dread question, and neither has any theodicy which I have read. Job is probably the only one who could provide us with an answer.

Jonathan David Price
Editor-in-Chief
The Clarion Review
Ashburn, Virginia

David B. Hart replies:
I fear that Mr. Price has failed to follow my argument, which may be my fault; but as he also repeats certain logical errors that I denounced in my piece (as when he confuses the order of ontological priority between charity and evil), I can scarcely concede many of his points. I submit also that he is a bit shaky in his understanding of Platonism.

I never suggested that good will not emerge from evil, or that no good will follow in the aftermath of what happened in the Indian Ocean. I merely pointed out that this good is the result of saving providence, that suffering and death are not *necessary* conditions of God's purposes for his creatures but the consequence of sin, and that Christ came to overthrow evil, not to legitimate it. That is to say, I was making a simple and necessary distinction between a Christian doctrine of transcendent providence and any kind of dialectical teleology. It is because he has misunderstood this distinction that Mr. Price mistakenly believes that I disagree with Aquinas rather than with, say, Hegel. Aquinas nowhere speaks of history's "synthesis," nor did he have much patience for the notion that God is the true author of evil.

As I was at pains to point out, the final question Mr. Price poses is a "dread question" only if indeed one ascribes the origin of evil to God, as part of His plan for His creatures. Since I for one do not believe this to be the case, the biblical answer to suffering, death, and evil seems to me eminently satisfying: They are to be destroyed as things alien and damnable to God, from which He will—in an act of infinite victory—save His creation, to glorify it with that glory He intended for it from before the foundation of the world.

Not So Fast

In "To Fast Again" (March 2005), Eamon Duffy refers favorably to the statement the bishops of the United States issued while lifting the mandatory abstinence from meat on Fridays. In that document, the bishops had a cautionary word for the great majority of Catholics who, they anticipated, would maintain the traditional discipline. They were told not to look down on those few who would seek out alternative penances.

Within a week, however, you were hard pressed to find a Catholic anywhere in the United States without a hot dog in hand on Friday. You would have been equally hard pressed to discover what alternative penance they were practicing.

Never underestimate the undermining influence a changing culture can have on tradition.

Bob Lockwood
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Duel over Dualism Continued

In "Dualistic Delusions" (February 2005), Patrick Lee and Robert P. George present a thoughtful discussion of my *New York Times* op-ed piece. They agree that body-soul dualism is both widespread and mistaken, but they disagree with me about much else. They suggest, for instance, that it is abortion advocates who assume a mistaken body-soul dualism, even though they "smugly conclude that science is on their side."

This would be ironic, but actually, as I discuss in my book *Descartes' Baby*, just about *everyone* believes in body-soul dualism. Devout Christians, who are more likely to oppose abortion, tend to be particularly explicit about this view. Most believe, for instance, that when they die, their souls will leave their bodies and rise to Heaven. Profs. Lee and George's own pro-life position does not rest on body-soul dualism, but they are mistaken when they assume that this is true for others.

Profs. Lee and George also worry that if science showed that conceptual thought and free choice are brain processes, it would mean there is only a superficial difference between humans and other animals, and this in turn would undermine the norms against eating, killing, and enslaving humans.

I don't see how any of this follows. If the scientific consensus is correct, it would mean that humans are not unique by dint of possessing a soul. But we may well be unique in some other way, such as possessing

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the capacity for language or abstract reasoning or emotional suffering.

Put this way, human uniqueness is an empirical issue, not an *a priori* one. Some other creature might turn out to share such properties with humans. But this discovery would not give us license to do terrible things to people. On the contrary, I would hope that Lee and George would agree with me that if a chimpanzee turned out to possess the intelligence and emotions of a human child, it would be wrong to eat, kill, or enslave it.

Paul Bloom
New Haven, Connecticut

Lee and George reply:
We are grateful to Prof. Bloom for his letter, and we are happy to engage the important issues he raises.

One argument of ours that he does not address is our defense of the proposition that the life of an individual human person begins at conception. But in reporting our claim he uses an inaccurate and prejudicial expression, one that we are, in fact, careful to avoid. We did not speak of a "fertilized egg." That is a misnomer. After fertilization the egg ceases to be (just as the sperm penetrating the egg ceases to be) and what then exists is a whole (though immature), distinct, individual human organism—a new member of the human species.

In his second paragraph, Prof. Bloom speaks of body-*soul* dualism. But we argued against body-*self* dualism, and pointed out that advocates of abortion often resort (usually implicitly) to body-self dualism when they identify the *person* with a consciousness somehow associated with the body, rather than with the living human animal that the human person is identical with. (This resort to body-self dualism reared its head recently once again in the controversy over Terri Schiavo. The claim made by some was that Mrs. Schiavo the person was no longer present even though the human being she had been for over forty-one years was undeniably still alive.)

Prof. Bloom claims that, though our pro-life position is not based on dualism, that of many other Christians is. But this is confused. *No one*'s belief that the life of a human individual begins at conception can be based on body-*self* dualism since such dualism (as we pointed out) lends no support to that belief. Prof. Bloom also ignores our point that the distinction between soul and body—philosophically defended by Aristotle, taught by Judaism and Christianity, and defended briefly in our article—is logically irrelevant to the specific issue of when personal human life begins. Since we are *essentially* human organisms, whenever the human organism begins, we begin, whether we have rational souls as aspects of ourselves or not.

Prof. Bloom is also mistaken when he says that most Christians believe "that when they die, their souls will leave their bodies and rise to Heaven." In fact, most Christians believe it is presumption to be absolutely certain their souls will immediately go to Heaven. The belief that their souls survive death—a belief we hold and briefly defended in our article—is not the same as identifying the person with the soul, which was the doctrine we were concerned to refute. Our claim was that the person is neither the body alone nor the soul alone. The person is a unity of body and soul.

Prof. Bloom is right to point out that someone can believe that mental acts are just brain processes but at the same time hold that (perhaps because of free choice) we are different in kind from other animals. Our point was that if all of our actions, including what seem to be free choices and exercises of conceptual thought, are just the result of the interactions of lower material forces, then what we do and what we are does not appear to be different in kind from what any other animal does or is.

One may, of course, deny this position on the basis of faith—as do some Christian materialists. Prof. Bloom himself does not seem to have the option of faith as a way out, and so his position—that humans do differ from other animals because of language or abstract thought, and yet such processes are simply the results of purely physical processes—seems ungrounded and possibly incoherent. (Bloom is right that the question of which animals are rational is empirical, and thus not something to be determined *a priori*. The evidence indicates that chimpanzees lack true conceptual thought or free choice, but if we discovered an animal or extraterrestrial creature that did have genuine capacity for conceptual thought and free choice, then such rational animals would have the same basic rights as humans.)

Prof. Bloom also claims that the first part of his thesis (that human beings are not unique by reason of possessing a rational soul) is "the scientific consensus." But that ignores a central argument in our article: Empirical science says nothing one way or the other about immaterial realities such as souls. Science neither affirms nor denies the existence of a rational soul, since its objects are physical, chemical, or strictly biological changes. Long ago, G.K. Chesterton noted that science said nothing one way or the other about sin or immortality: "When people say that science has shaken their faith in immortality, what do they mean? Did they think that immortality was a gas?" Similarly, we might ask, what did Prof. Bloom think a rational soul is supposed to be if he thought a "consensus" of science disturbed it?

Talking About Torture

Torture, the inflicting of excruciating pain, is a direct attack on the integrity of the body. Everyone possesses the right of immunity from assault in order to live humanly. This right is

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analogous to the right one has not to be deprived of the sense of sight. Thus, the act of torture is always and everywhere immoral. Richard John Neuhaus (Public Square, March 2005) appropriately asks: "Does the duty to protect thousands of innocent lives override the duty not to torture?" The reply should be in the negative. An intrinsically immoral act is never permissible, not matter what physical good it may occasion.

The policy of our government to shoot down hijacked airplanes, also mentioned by Fr. Neuhaus, requires a review of the principle of double effect. According to traditional morality, a person must verify several conditions before performing an action that results in two effects, one good and the other evil. In this instance, the passengers and crew are killed; the targeted victims of the terrorists are saved.

To solve this problem, we must determine whether or not certain conditions are met. Natural law ethicists point out that, first of all, the act itself must be good or indifferent theoretically. To destroy a plane-become-a-bomb is not an intrinsically evil act. And in this case, the evil effect certainly does not produce the good effect. The deaths of the travelers on the commercial jet is not what safeguards the terrorists' intended victims. It is, rather, the elimination of the airplane that thwarts the murderers.

Obviously, neither the government nor the Air Force pilot who pulls the trigger intends the death of the innocent people on the commercial flight. Finally, the total effects of the action—good and evil—must at least counterbalance one another. Indeed, the evil effect must not outweigh the good produced. This condition requires a most carefully formed, prudential judgment. Human lives are at stake. On September 11, the two commercial airplanes carried perhaps 280 persons. About 2,800 people died at the World Trade Center. On that heartrending day, the government's policy would have fulfilled the fourth condition of the principle of the double effect.

(The Rev.) Kenneth F. Slattery, C.M.
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Richard John Neuhaus' reiteration of his firm rejection of torture is most welcome, as is his call for more serious Christian theological assessments of torture. Fr. Neuhaus' comments would have been strengthened, however, if, instead of focusing on "ticking bomb" scenarios and the "quandaries" that torturers face, he had engaged the extensive literature that argues that torture is often used, not for the purpose of obtaining information, but as a means of inscribing the power of the state on the bodies of those its agents torture. William Cavanaugh's important study *Torture and Eucharist* is extremely helpful in this regard.

Alain Epp Weaver
Amman, Jordan

What *Secular* Means

Reading Richard John Neuhaus' comments on Christian Smith's "secularization theory" (Public Square, March 2005), I wonder about equating secularization with the "exclusion of religion from our public life" or "agitation for a naked public square."

"Secular" is a positive term, a theological construct actually. It is the human world of being with its own final cause in time, the common good. The word "secular" also alludes to the moral call to *homo faber* to share in the divine providential ordering of creation. When this happens it is God's own glory that is manifested, His created purposes for the world having been reached. "Secular," with its traditional theological legitimacy reaching back to Gelasius' theory of the "two swords" of legitimate power and even to Christ's call for justice to Caesar and to God, is a word we need. It helps us to distinguish between the very real sacred and secular horizons of social existence.

"Secularization" is also a positive term. It refers to an historical exigency that, as Peter Berger explained in *The Sacred Canopy*, began with the de-divinization of nature, which left the concrete word in which we actually live out our lives free to be explored by science and free human creative agency. The connotations of the Hebrew word *mitzvot* capture the possibilities revealed with secularization: God left a little bit of good to be done in creating the world; it is our moral task to do it. Secularization has historically revealed this divine call.

What Fr. Neuhaus needs is the word "secularism," to describe the new social reality that corrupted the positive value of secularization. Secularism is the collective non-religious consciousness of modern society. It regards the practical denial of God as the attitude a society should take as the basis of its mediating institutions and government. It is a sense of godlessness that has become a part of common attitudes of the general population.

Macon Boczek
Novelty, Ohio

RJN replies:
Of course Macon Boczek is right about the dignity and integrity of the secular. My comments, however, followed Christian Smith in his book *The Secular Revolution*, who addressed secularization in the common usage, meaning the exclusion of religion from public life.

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Opinion

A Jewish-Catholic Bioethics?

Eric Cohen

The term "Judeo-Christian" has entered our civic vocabulary for good reason. On many of the deepest issues of human life—the meaning of sex, the dignity of the family, the creation of human beings—Jews and Christians stand together against the secular image of man.

But occasionally, even close friends have disagreements. In a March 2005 essay in the online magazine *Slate*, William Saletan observed that traditional Catholics and conservative Jews do not always think alike when they gather at meetings like those of the President's Council on Bioethics. According to Saletan, Catholics raise deep questions and then presume to answer them with divinely confident reason. Jews raise those same deep questions but seem less certain that reason can ever finally settle them. Catholics oppose clear evils like embryo destruction. Jews worry about diffuse evils like the "corruption of our sensibilities."

There's some truth in Saletan's claim, though matters are, of course, much more complicated. The particular Jews he discusses—Leon Kass, Charles Krauthammer, Yuval Levin, and even me—are hardly representative of Jewish bioethics. In many respects, we are outcasts. We oppose most or all forms of embryo research, for instance, and vehemently oppose the creation of embryos solely for research and destruction. By contrast, with all the division among the branches of Judaism—about keeping Kosher, intermarriage, driving on the Sabbath—destroying embryos for research is a point of remarkable theological agreement. The preeminent Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Jewish organizations in America have all given their ethical endorsement, seeing embryonic stem-cell research as not only permissible under Jewish law but an embodiment of Jewish values. Reverence for life means seeking cures for disease; *ex vivo* embryos are a justified sacrifice—or little sacrifice at all—in the sacred cause of medicine.

A few prominent Jewish ethicists and halakhic experts dissent, seeing embryo destruction as potentially a prohibited form of feticide. But these voices are in the Jewish minority. Most Jewish thinkers support embryo research with few qualms, and many Jews see opposition to embryo research—or even the denial of federal funding for such research—as an illegitimate imposition of Christian values.

Rabbi Elliot Dorff is a typical example. His guidelines on embryonic stem-cell research—adopted nearly unanimously by Conservative Judaism's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards—begin by describing, at great length, the cutting edge of stem-cell science: the various methods and sources for deriving embryonic stem cells, the potential to test new drugs and develop new cellular therapies, and the state of research at different American laboratories. The document revels in its scientific sophistication before turning to the fundamental ethical question: Should Jews support the destruction of human embryos for research?

To answer this, Dorff turns to Jewish law on abortion, and especially the Jewish understanding of what embryos and fetuses are as they develop. After forty days, he says, the fetus is classified by the ancient rabbis as "the thigh of its mother"; before forty days, he says, the embryo is "simply water." Dorff says that it makes sense to follow such teachings only if they cohere with the truths of modern science. And then, inexplicably, he concludes that they do, ignoring the significance of what we now know biologically: that a new organism exists from the moment of conception; that the very first cell divisions are orderly and purposeful; that forty days is a meaningless moment from the standpoint of continuous embryological development; that by forty days the primordial head, arms, and legs have already formed, the primitive heart tube is present, the nerves of the face are developing. The notion that "simply water" is the best metaphor for understanding the unfolding human being in our care is absurd. It is morally and theologically irresponsible to seek the fruits of modern science in the form of stem-cell research without confronting the facts of modern embryology in order to understand what embryos really are.

Jewish thinkers such as Rabbi Dorff commit two errors simultaneously. They embrace modern biomedical science as a faith in itself, and thus lose the mystical vision that might allow them to see embryos as more than simply microscopic cells. And they appeal—often selectively—to ancient religious sources without confronting the new scientific facts that make some of these sources a problem. They are, at once, too attached to modern biology and too removed from modern biology. And one wonders whether some of Dorff's

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confusions—like describing gametes and embryos in the same breath as "potential building blocks of life," or equating embryos with other cells of the body, or describing the destruction of an embryo as "taking a part of an object"—are not deliberate efforts to make embryo research seem more innocent than it is.

Perhaps the problem is simply that most Jewish thinkers have chosen one Jewish value—the good of healing—as the prism through which to see the old sources. Other considerations—like the law against deliberate killing or the belief in the sanctity of every life as created in the image of God—might lead to different conclusions. The Jewish sources themselves pull in many directions: the *Zohar* declares that "he who causes the fetus to be destroyed in the womb . . . destroys the artifice of the Holy One. . . . For these abominations the Spirit of Holiness weeps." R. Meir Simchah says that the killing of a fetus is punishable by "death at the hands of heaven." Nachmanides finds that the Sabbath may be violated to save an unborn child, even in the first forty days of development. *Sanhedrin* 57b interprets the biblical text "Whoso sheddeth the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed" to include "Whoso sheddeth the blood of man, within man shall his blood be shed." And who is a "man within man," the rabbis ask? "A fetus within the womb."

To be sure, there are many Jewish sources that cut in other directions, especially in the standing they accord to embryos in the first forty days. But these sources deal mostly with the laws of purity for potentially pregnant women or for women who miscarry; they do not deal directly with the moral meaning of deliberately killing early embryos. Likewise, the key text in Exodus, which requires a man who causes a miscarriage by colliding with a pregnant woman to pay a monetary fine, does not deal with the meaning of deliberate killing. Deliberate killing, however, is what embryo research necessarily requires, especially research that creates embryos solely for exploitation and destruction.

Some Jewish thinkers, including Dorff, argue that the embryo *ex vivo* has limited moral standing because it cannot develop to term outside the womb. But surely all human beings deprived of the environment they need to flourish have "limited potential for life." A bird trapped in a cage may never learn to fly, but it is no less a bird for the harm we caused by putting it there. A grown woman without food or water will surely die, but this lack of sustenance does not make the doomed person less than human. If anything, it challenges the humanity of those who left her there to die in the first place.

Perhaps the one great halakhic exception to the pro-embryo research consensus in modern Judaism is Rabbi J. David Bleich, a giant of ethical and legal scholarship in the Orthodox Jewish world. Bleich rejects the argument that embryos and fetuses *in utero* possess greater moral standing than embryos and fetuses *ex utero*. But he reminds Jews to stand more humbly before the mystery of new life by reminding them of Ecclesiastes: "As thou knowest not what is the way of the wind, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; Even so thou knowest not the work of God Who doeth all things." And Bleich concludes his meditation on the ethics of stem-cell research by praising the Catholic Church for its witness in defense of nascent human life: "The Catholic Church now uniquely fulfills a different role in the transcendental divine plan, *i.e.*, it tenaciously promulgates the notion of the sanctity of fetal life and the teaching that abortion constitutes homicide. Non-Jews who engage in that endeavor do so with divine approbation. Non-Jews engaged in fulfilling a sacred mission are surely deserving of commendation, applause, and support."

Bleich is not convinced, as Catholics are, that early embryos are the moral equivalent of full human persons. Neither are some of the Jewish conservatives involved with the President's Council on Bioethics. Bleich's questions are grounded in the mystery of Jewish sources, and the chairman of the council, Leon Kass, sees a possible tension between our moral intuitions about early embryos and the rational account of early embryos as full persons; he opposes embryo destruction but is not convinced that *ex vivo* embryos are necessarily equal. My own view is that the Catholic arguments are indeed the most rational, but accepting them in a moment of trial—such as choosing between the child who is dying and the embryo who might save him—would require a faith that is truly other-worldly and thus seemingly absurd to this-worldly eyes.

But whatever fine philosophical differences may exist in theory, Jewish conservatives who engage publicly on these issues have spent the past several years fighting for prohibitions on embryo destruction. As Jews, we know well what it means to treat some human lives as less than human, or some human beings as there for experimentation. We know the moral hazards of justifying such dehumanizing violations on the grounds that embryos are "going to die anyway," just the way some Nazi doctors justified their inhuman experiments. Embryo destruction is not the moral equivalent of the Holocaust, but the lessons of the Holocaust should give us the wisdom to oppose making embryo destruction the new foundation of modern medicine. That, it seems to me, is the heart of Jewish wisdom.

But it is also only part of the story. In the post-Holocaust age, the Jewish mind is not only keenly

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aware of the dangers of mistreating innocent life. Jews are also afraid of the demographic death of the Jewish people. The pathos of infertility—a continual theme in the Hebrew Bible—is more powerful than ever, while the place of procreation remains central to the Jewish idea of holiness, to Jewish self-understanding as a sacred people, to the Jewish obligation of passing down God's way from one generation to the next. As it says in *Yevamot*:

> "Should the number of Israelites happen to be two thousand and two myriads less one, and any particular person has not engaged in the propagation of the race, does he not thereby cause the Divine Presence to depart from Israel?" Abba Hanan said in the name of Rabbi Eliezar: "He deserves the penalty of death; for it is said, 'And they had no children, but if they had children they would not have died.'" Others say: "He causes the Divine Presence to depart from Israel; for it is said: 'To be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee'; where there exists 'seed after thee', the Divine Presence dwells among them; but where no 'seed after thee' exists, among whom should it dwell? Among the trees or among the stones?"

With this in mind, think about how human embryos came to exist outside the body at all, to be seen with human eyes and held with human hands. We produced embryos outside the protective darkness of the womb in order to give those whom nature made barren a natural child. *In vitro* fertilization was a technological answer to Sarah's laughter and Hannah's cry: "O Lord of Hosts, if You will look upon the suffering of Your maidservant and will remember me and not forget Your maidservant, and if You will grant Your maidservant a male child, I will dedicate him to the Lord for all the days of his life." To give birth is to be eternally remembered; to be childless is to be eternally forgotten.

Many orthodox Jews see this as grounds for defending even reproductive cloning in certain situations if it were possible and safe. As Yitzchok Breitowitz, one of Orthodox Judaism's finest ethicists and halakhic experts, has argued: "Let us assume that the individual is the last survivor of a family that was decimated in the Holocaust and let us assume that he was castrated in a concentration camp. If he dies, there will be no perpetuation of his family line. . . . Cloning is as close as the couple in this scenario could possibly come to producing a child that is on some level the genetic product of both of them. One clearly could defend, I think, the morality of the use of reproductive cloning for that limited purpose." To some degree, every Jew after the Holocaust feels like a Holocaust survivor. And while Breitowitz explores the many dilemmas raised by reproductive cloning, he believes that cloning to produce children presents no inherent problem from the standpoint of Jewish ethics and Jewish law. The wisdom of engaging in human cloning should be judged case by case, he says, and surely not banned by the state.

And so here we have yet another great Jewish irony and internal Jewish conflict: For decades Leon Kass has been the most eloquent and passionate opponent of human reproductive cloning, seeing it as a violation of the dignity of human procreation, a violation of the relationship between the generations, a violation of the uniqueness of new human life, a violation of the sexual character of human reproduction. And yet, it is Orthodox Jews who make the ethical case for cloning with greatest force—as a way to perpetuate a holy people when it is the only biological alternative.

The Jewish defense of cloning strikes me as woefully misguided—a deep misunderstanding of what it means to participate as husband and wife in the creation of new life. But the Jewish defense of cloning is a perversion of something more genuine: the special meaning of procreation within Judaism, and what it means not only for the human family in general but for *this* particular human family. As Kass himself has explained, children are part of the Jewish answer to mortality, a Jewish way of participating in the immortal. Children connect Jews directly to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to those blood relatives chosen by God to bring God's new way into the world. In prayer, Jews sing *l'dor v'dor*: "from generation to generation." In law, Judaism passes down through birth, not baptism. This is why *in vitro* fertilization finds nearly universal support within all branches of Judaism—as permissible, never obligatory—and why even those Jews who oppose embryo research often reluctantly embrace *in vitro* fertilization.

Catholics, in their more universalistic wisdom, do not. They oppose *in vitro* fertilization precisely because it corrupts rather than fulfills the dignity of human procreation; because it separates the unitive and procreative purposes of marriage; because it turns the mysterious birth of new life into a technological project; because it paves the way for the age of human cloning and genetic engineering; and because it destroys thousands of embryos as "byproducts" and abandons thousands more as "spares." Most deeply, the practice of *in vitro* fertilization compromises the connection between sex and holiness: the way the sexual encounter of man and wife, created in the image of God, gives them a glimpse of the divine communion of the Triune God and the mysteries of Creation itself.

The good that *in vitro* fertilization has produced—the many lives now living—is undeniable. But so are

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the moral hazards. As a universal ethic, the Catholic position is compelling, certainly in its prudence about the many evils *in vitro* fertilization has already caused (like mass embryo destruction) or will likely facilitate in the future (like growing genetic manipulation of our offspring).

But as a particularistic ethics—as a practice engaged in by God's Chosen People, confronted with the suffering of Sarah and Hannah—*in vitro* fertilization *may* have a theological purpose and thus a moral justification, if done within marriage and without producing excess embryos. It may be that Jews and Catholics—who share so much in their understanding of the dignity of procreation and marriage—must part ways in their understanding of what holiness in action requires in certain tragic cases of infertility.

As a Jew, I respect the Catholic position deeply and tremble at the practice of initiating new life in the laboratory, even as I wonder at the magnificence of giving new life—flesh of the couple's flesh—when *in vitro* fertilization is the only way to do so. And I hope that Catholics tremble when they tell an infertile couple—including an infertile Jewish couple—that having a biological child should not be done even if it could be done, even as they wonder at the magnificence of the Catholic vision of human sexuality and its connection to the mystery of God's inner life. This is a disagreement among friends mutually devoted to holiness; it is a disagreement that God will surely settle in His own way and in His own time.

But on most things that count—including embryo research—faithful Jews should stand alongside their Catholic friends as Judeo-Christians, opposing together the imageless image of man that secularism offers. I only hope that my Jewish friends, for Jewish reasons, will become more reasonable than they sometimes are.

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An Unworkable Theology

Philip Turner

It is increasingly difficult to escape the fact that mainline Protestantism is in a state of disintegration. As attendance declines, internal divisions increase. Take, for instance, the situation of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The Episcopal Church's problem is far more theological than it is moral—a theological poverty that is truly monumental and that stands behind the moral missteps recently taken by its governing bodies.

Every denomination has its theological articles and books of theology, its liturgies and confessional statements. Nonetheless, the contents of these documents do not necessarily control what we might call the "working theology" of a church. To find the working theology of a church one must review the resolutions passed at official gatherings and listen to what clergy say Sunday by Sunday from the pulpit. One must listen to the conversations that occur at clergy gatherings—and hear the advice clergy give troubled parishioners. The working theology of a church is, in short, best determined by becoming what social anthropologists call a "participant observer."

For thirty-five years, I have been such a participant observer in the Episcopal Church. After ten years as a missionary in Uganda, I returned to this country and began graduate work in Christian Ethics with Paul Ramsey at Princeton University. Three years later I took up a post at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest. Full of excitement, I listened to my first student sermon—only to be taken aback by its vacuity. The student began with the wonderful question, "What is the Christian Gospel?" But his answer, through the course of an entire sermon, was merely: "God is love. God loves us. We, therefore, ought to love one another." I waited in vain for some word about the saving power of Christ's cross or the declaration of God's victory in Christ's resurrection. I waited in vain for a promise of the Holy Spirit. I waited in vain also for an admonition to wait patiently and faithfully for the Lord's return. I waited in vain for a call to repentance and amendment of life in accord with the pattern of Christ's life.

The contents of the preaching I had heard for a decade from the pulpits of the Anglican Church of Uganda (and from other Christians throughout the continent of Africa) was simply not to be found. One could, of course, dismiss this instance of vacuous preaching as simply another example of the painful inadequacy of the preaching of most seminarians; but, over the years, I have heard the same sermon preached from pulpit after pulpit by experienced priests. The Episcopal sermon, at its most fulsome, begins with a statement to the effect that the incarnation is to be understood as merely a manifestation of divine love. From this starting point, several conclusions are drawn. The first is that God is love pure and simple. Thus, one is to see in Christ's death no judgment upon the human

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condition. Rather, one is to see an affirmation of creation and the persons we are. The life and death of Jesus reveal the fact that God accepts and affirms us.

From this revelation, we can draw a further conclusion: God wants us to love one another, and such love requires of us both acceptance and affirmation of the other. From this point we can derive yet another: Accepting love requires a form of justice that is inclusive of all people, particularly those who in some way have been marginalized by oppressive social practice. The mission of the Church is, therefore, to see that those who have been rejected are included—for justice as inclusion defines public policy. The result is a practical equivalence between the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and a particular form of social justice.

For those who view the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops and its General Convention from the outside, many of their recent actions may seem to represent a denial of something fundamental to the Christian way of life. But for many inside the Episcopal Church, the equation of the Gospel and social justice constitutes a primary expression of Christian truth. This isn't an ethical divide about the rightness or wrongness of homosexuality and same-sex marriage. It's a theological chasm—one that separates those who hold a theology of divine *acceptance* from those who hold a theology of divine *redemption*.

Look, for example, at the increasingly common practice of inviting non-baptized persons to share in the Holy Eucharist. The invitation is given in the name of "radical hospitality." It is like having a guest at the family meal, so its advocates claim: it is a way to invite people in and evangelize.

Within the Episcopal Church, a sure test of whether an idea is gaining favor is the appearance of a question about it on the general-ordination exam. Questions on divorce and remarriage, the ordination of women, sexual behavior, and abortion all preceded changes in the Episcopal Church's teaching and practice. On a recent version of the exam, there appeared a question about "open communion for the non-baptized," which suggests that this is far more than a cloud on the horizon. It is, rather, a change in doctrine and practice that is fast becoming well established and perhaps should be of greater concern to the Anglican Communion's ecumenical partners than the recent changes in moral teaching and practice.

Indeed, it is important to note when examining the working theology of the Episcopal Church that changes in belief and practice within the church are not made after prolonged investigation and theological debate. Rather, they are made by "prophetic actions" that give expression to the doctrine of radical inclusion. Such actions have become common partly because they carry no cost. Since the struggle over the ordination of women, the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops has given up any attempt to act as a unified body or to discipline its membership. Within a given diocese, almost any change in belief and practice can occur without penalty.

Certain justifications are commonly named for such failure of discipline. The first is the claim of the prophet's mantle by the innovators—often quickly followed by an assertion that the Holy Spirit Itself is doing this new thing, which need have no perceivable link to the past practice of the church. Backed by claims of prophetic and Spirit-filled insight, each diocese can then justify its action as a "local option," which is the claimed right of each diocese or parish to go its own way if there seem to be strong enough internal reasons to do so.

All of these justifications are currently being offered for the practice of open communion—which is the clearest possible signal that it is an idea whose time has come in the Episcopal Church. But the deep roots of the idea are in the doctrine of radical inclusion. Once we have reduced the significance of Christ's resurrection and downplayed holiness of life as a fundamental marker of Christian identity, the notion of radical inclusion produces the view that one need not come to the Father through the Son. Christ is *a* way, but not *the* way. The Holy Eucharist is a sign of acceptance on the part of God and God's people, and so should be open to all—the invitation unaccompanied by a call to repentance and amendment of life.

This unofficial doctrine of radical inclusion, which is now the working theology of the Episcopal Church, plays out in two directions. In respect to God, it produces a quasi-deist theology that posits a benevolent God who favors love and justice as inclusion but acts neither to save us from our sins nor to raise us to new life after the pattern of Christ. In respect to human beings, it produces an ethic of tolerant affirmation that carries with it no call to conversion and radical holiness.

The Episcopal Church's working theology is also congruent with a form of pastoral care designed to help people affirm themselves, face their difficulties, and adjust successfully to their particular circumstances. The primary (though not the sole) pastoral formation offered to the Episcopal Church's prospective clergy has for a number of years been "Clinical Pastoral Education," which takes the form of an internship at a hospital or some other care-giving institution. The focus tends to be the expressed needs of a "client," the attitudes and contributions of a "counselor," and the

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transference and countertransference that define their relationship. In its early days, the supervisors of Clinical Pastoral Education were heavily influenced by the client-centered therapy of Carl Rogers, but the theoretical framework employed today varies widely. A dominant assumption in all forms, however, is that the clients have, within themselves, the answer to their perplexities and conflicts. Access to personal resources and successful adjustment are what the pastor is to seek when offering pastoral care.

There may be some merit in putting new clergy in hospital settings, but this particular form does not lend itself easily to the sort of meeting with Christ that leads to faith, forgiveness, judgment, repentance, and amendment of life. The sort of confrontation often necessary to spark such a process is decidedly frowned upon. The theological stance associated with Clinical Pastoral Education is not one of challenge but one in which God is depicted as an accepting presence—not unlike that of the therapist or pastor.

But this should not be an unexpected development. In a theology dominated by radical inclusion, terms such as "faith," "justification," "repentance," and "holiness of life" seem to belong to an antique vocabulary that must be outgrown or reinterpreted. So also does the notion that the Church is a community elected by God for the particular purpose of bearing witness to the saving event of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

It is this witness that defines the great tradition of the Church, but a theology of radical inclusion must trim such robust belief. To be true to itself it can find room for only one sort of witness: inclusion of the previously excluded. God has already included everybody, and now we ought to do the same. Salvation cannot be the issue. The theology of radical inclusion, as preached and practiced within the Episcopal Church, must define the central issue as moral rather than religious, since exclusion is in the end a moral issue even for God.

We must say this clearly: The Episcopal Church's current working theology depends upon the obliteration of God's difficult, redemptive love in the name of a new revelation. The message, even when it comes from the mouths of its more sophisticated exponents, amounts to inclusion *without qualification*.

Thinking back over my thirty-five years in the Episcopal Church, I was distressed to realize that this new revelation is little different from the basic message communicated to me during the course of my own theological education. Fortunately, in my case God provided an intervening event. I lived for about ten years among the Baganda, a people who dwell on the north shore of Lake Victoria. The Baganda have a proverb which, roughly translated, says, "A person who never travels always praises his own mother's cooking." Travel allowed me to taste something different. It was not until I had spent a long time abroad that I realized how far apart the American Episcopal Church stood from the basic content of "Nicene Christianity," with its thick description of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, its richly developed Christology, and its compelling account of Christ's call to holiness of life.

The future of Anglicanism as a communion of churches may depend upon the American Episcopal Church's ability to find a way out of the terrible constraints forced upon it by its working theology. Much of the Anglican communion in Africa sees the problem. Can the Americans? It is not enough simply to refer to the Episcopal Church's Book of Common Prayer and reply, "We are orthodox just like you: we affirm the two testaments as the word of God, we recite the classical creeds in our worship, we celebrate the dominical sacraments, and we hold to episcopal order." The challenge now being put to the Episcopal Church in the United States (and, by implication, to all liberal Protestantism) is not about official documents. It is about the church's working theology—one which most Anglicans in the rest of the world no longer recognize as Christian.

Philip Turner is the former Dean of the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. He currently serves as Vice President of the Anglican Communion Institute.

A Label that Sticks

Paul Scalia

When I was in high school, the students fell into many different groups: preps, jocks, cheerleaders, punks, deadheads, druggies, geeks, and all the rest. Just about everyone received an unofficial but virtually unchangeable assignment to a particular group. When I work in high schools today, I discover little difference. The groups still exist (with just a few changes in terminology), and the teachers and administrators still counsel against the labels. As they wisely explain, labels reinforce stereotypes and prejudices; they prevent us from accepting individuals and getting to know the real person.

There is one difference, however. While still warning children against stereotypes and labels, high-school administrations increasingly encourage one group of students to label themselves: those who expe-

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rience same-sex attractions. With the assistance (and sometimes pressure) of such groups as the Gay-Straight Alliance and the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, high schools across the country now routinely have student organizations dedicated to promoting the tolerance and acceptance of homosexuality. Indeed, New York City has an entire school—Harvey Milk High School—devoted to "gay, lesbian, transgendered and questioning youth."

Is it worth pointing out, even at this late date, that the teachers and administrators were right about the dangers of labeling—and wrong when they allowed and encouraged homosexual students to be labeled? As with most errors, this one proceeds from a certain truth and often from good intentions. The truth is that adolescents with same-sex attractions have a higher suicide rate and are more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs. Attributing these problems to persecution and harassment, the new groups pledge to create a safe atmosphere so that students will not be tempted to self-destructive behavior.

But in practice this agenda means more than just an end to the name-calling. It means the approval of homosexuality and, in a new form of name-calling, an insistence that adolescents who experience same-sex attractions "come out" as homosexual.

This is, to begin with, a failure of common sense. Such categorizations feed into the adolescent penchant for labels. High-school students want to belong to a group. They want an identity. Getting to know other people, figuring them out, sorting out who you are in light of who they are—that can be difficult work. Labels make it much easier. Many adolescents latch on to an identity for a time and then think better of it later. For this reason parents and teachers traditionally guard against pigeonholing students in certain categories.

The new approach, however, does just the opposite. It encourages labeling. Rather than struggle through the difficulties of adolescence, a high-school freshman or sophomore can now, with official support, profess to be gay—and he instantly has an identity and a group. Now he belongs. He knows who he is. Gone is the possibility that adolescents might be confused, perhaps even wrong. Adults typically display a wise reserve about the self-discoveries of high-school students: they know adolescents are still figuring things out, and they recognize their responsibility to help sort through the confusion. So why is all this natural wisdom somehow abandoned these days—in the most confused and confusing area of adolescent sexuality?

Of course, the phrases are tempting because of their convenience and efficiency. They are common, close at hand, and make quick work of a difficult issue. But they also identify an individual person with his homosexual inclinations. They presume that a person *is* his inclinations or attractions; he *is* a "gay" or *is* a "homosexual." At some point adults have to admit that a fifteen-year-old who claims to be "a questioning transgendered bisexual" is really just confused.

Meanwhile, the schools' endorsement of all this quickly undermines parents' authority in an extraordinarily sensitive area. While the parents try to teach one thing at home, the school presents the opposite view, now not only in the classroom but also socially (which in high school might have a greater effect). And those parents who have a better way to handle their child's difficulties will find their efforts thwarted. At home they strive to love their children, help them in their struggles, and teach a coherent truth about human sexuality. Meanwhile at school, children receive the propaganda and encouragement to argue precisely against what their parents say.

Much of this social engineering rests on the view that homosexuality is a fixed, inborn orientation. The school groups hold this as a dogma not open for discussion. In one of the presidential debates last year, when asked if he thought homosexuality was inherited or chosen, President Bush wisely and modestly answered that he did not know. With that he showed himself to be fairly well aligned with the scientific community, which itself cannot produce a uniform answer to the question. The supposed "gay gene" has never been proven or discovered. The most we can say is that certain people may have genetic predispositions towards homosexuality—which is a far cry from saying they inherit it.

The high-school organizations, however, have no qualms about pronouncing the matter settled. Insisting that homosexuality is inborn, they immediately conclude that an adolescent with homosexual inclinations must necessarily *be* homosexual, or gay, or lesbian, or transgendered—whichever label fits.

And once the label is assigned, it is awfully hard to remove. It lasts past high school and leaves the adolescent at the mercy of our culture's extremes. *What man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?* Increasingly, our high schools distribute stones and serpents to hungry children. Adolescents legitimately confused or anxious about their sexuality receive the advice to assume the homosexual label, truncating their identities perhaps for their entire lives.

Given the obvious errors of this new approach, the question still remains, especially for parents: How should one respond to adolescents with same-sex attractions? Love must be the leading edge of the

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response. The school organizations attract adolescents precisely because they pledge unconditional acceptance and affirmation of the person, no matter what "orientation" he has. Never mind that receiving this acceptance and affirmation in effect requires signing up for the gay agenda, adolescents still perceive it as acceptance and affirmation. Parents need to understand how effective this is. The first point to make known, then, is not what is wrong but what is right: The child is lovable, and is loved. That love, more than anything else, instills in adolescents the trust and confidence they need to struggle with whatever painful and saddening realities they face.

Difficulties arise when the child insists on being accepted and loved not as a person but as a "gay," "homosexual," or "other"—when he wants to be loved according to the label. And our culture willingly indulges these labels for the same reason we used them in high school: we find it easier to deal with labels than with actual persons. Clearly this situation demands tremendous patience and perseverance; it requires parents to insist continually that, no, their child is not just the sum of his sexual attractions, that they can love their child while rejecting some of his actions.

Adolescents need to hear precisely this: People's sexual inclinations do not determine their identity. Nor does every so-called "homosexual" feel attractions of the same character or to the same degree. Some have strong and lasting homosexual desires; for others, such desires are slight and passing. Lumping everyone together as having the same orientation or identity is a grotesque reduction of a complicated reality, and it massively damages the very people it claims to help.

Resisting the labeling temptation demands that we reject the culture's vocabulary and adopt more precise terms. In popular usage, the words "gay" and "lesbian" imply a fixed orientation and the living out of a lifestyle. Even the term "homosexual person," which is used in some Vatican documents, suggests that homosexual inclinations somehow determine, which is to say confine, a person's identity.

Granted, the more accurate phrases do not trip easily off the tongue. But what is lost in efficiency is gained in precision. Terms such as "same-sex attractions" and "homosexual inclinations" express what a person experiences without identifying the person with those attractions. They both acknowledge the attractions and preserve the freedom and dignity of the person. With that essential distinction made, parents can better oppose the attractions without rejecting the child. And as the child matures, he will not find his identity confined to his sexuality.

Further, opposition to homosexual attractions and actions makes sense only when it is rooted in the full truth of human sexuality. Gay school groups gain approval and support partly because heterosexual unchastity (contraception, masturbation, premarital sex, adultery, and all the rest) has compromised so many. Our culture's deliberate separation of sex from procreation has destroyed our ability to articulate a coherent explanation of sexual ethics. Parents and educators have damaged the tools that would allow them to explain why homosexual activity is wrong.

Understanding the full truth of human sexuality produces an appreciation for purity. Of course, all young people need to strive for this virtue. But purity takes on a greater significance for those with same-sex attractions. Nothing will confirm a supposed "gay" identity more quickly and solidly than homosexual actions. After a homosexual encounter, the adolescent must either admit the error of his actions and repent—or more boldly identify himself with his actions and look for a way to justify them.

As sexual license increases in our culture, we will encounter more adolescents confused about their sexuality and perhaps experiencing same-sex attractions. The easy option is to dissolve the tension by approving homosexuality and even encouraging it. But the most charitable thing we can do for such youth is to love them as God's own images, to teach them the full truth about human sexuality, and to enable them to live it. Anything less is giving our children stones when they ask for bread.

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Mere Apologetics

Avery Cardinal Dulles

C.S. Lewis was a man of many parts. His novels, allegories, and children's books achieved enormous popularity. He excelled as a spiritual writer and had some standing as a poet. In the academic field he was competent in philosophy, a master of the Greek and Latin classics, and outstanding as a literary critic.

But he is best known today as an apologist—probably the most successful Christian apologist of the twentieth century. Forty and more years after his death, his influence remains unabated. His works are read by Protestants and Catholics with equal relish. Enough books have been written on Lewis to fill several shelves of a bookcase.

Although Lewis' achievements in apologetics have been generally acclaimed, he is not without his critics. In his lifetime he had to meet objections from his fellow Anglican W. Norman Pittinger and the Catholic philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe. In 1985, twenty-two years after his death, a book-length refutation of Lewis' entire apologetical project was published by the philosopher John Beversluis. The various criticisms, however, reflect the presuppositions of their authors, which are not self-evidently true. One problem stems from the notion of "mere Christianity," which Lewis selected as the position to be defended. It is easy to object that there is no such thing as "mere Christianity" and that major differences, such as those between Protestants and Catholics, cannot be papered over. Aware of the objection, Lewis compared mere Christianity to a hall through which one finds one's way into the bedrooms of a house. The hall is not a place where anyone wishes to stay, but it is a place from which one can gain access to one or another of the rooms, recognizing that those in neighboring rooms are one's housemates. By "mere Christianity" Lewis means the common fund of doctrines and practices enshrined in Scripture and the early creeds, which are foundational for most Christian churches.

Lewis developed his apologetic for Christianity in three stages. First, he set out to establish the existence of God on grounds that are chiefly philosophical. Then he sought to demonstrate that God has preeminently revealed himself in Christ and in the Christian religion. Finally, he defended theism and Christianity against common objections, such as the problem of evil.

Against the prevalent agnosticism of his day and ours, Lewis believed it was possible to demonstrate the existence of God, at least in the sense of making God's existence vastly more likely than his non-existence. He was aware of the ontological argument, usually identified with Anselm and Descartes, and the cosmological arguments classically set forth by Thomas Aquinas. As for the ontological argument, which deduced God's existence from the very concept of a Necessary Being, he said in a letter to his brother Warren that the argument would not be valid unless one first established that the idea of Necessary Being from which it begins is objectively grounded and is not a mere fabrication of our minds. He did not reject the cosmological arguments from the facts of change, causality, and contingency, but he confessed in a letter to his friend Bede Griffiths that they were ineffective for him personally. But his own favorite proofs are those from morality, from reason, and from desire.

The argument from morality, rather fully set forth in Lewis' radio talks, *The Case for Christianity*, begins with the assertion that we are unconditionally bound

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to do good and avoid evil. All normal human beings spontaneously judge that certain actions are wrong and ought not to be done. They know they ought to be honest, truthful, temperate, just, and loving toward others—and that they are forbidden to commit theft, perjury, adultery, murder, and the like. About the details of the moral code there can be disagreements, but not about its obligatory character. The question is where the obligation comes from. According to the classical tradition of Christian theology, stemming from St. Paul, the obligation comes from God who, so to speak, writes His law upon the human heart, so that even people to whom the positive moral law has not been proclaimed have an inborn sense of what is commanded or prohibited. When they do wrong, they suffer from a bad conscience and realize that they deserve to be punished.

Lewis takes up and refutes the most common objections to this argument. He gives solid reasons for denying that the sense of moral obligation could arise from a herd instinct, from social convention, or from a Freudian superego. The only adequate explanation, he maintains, is that we are subject to a higher will, to which we are accountable for the use we make of our freedom. Addressing a popular audience, Lewis does not enter into every technicality or refute every difficulty, but he puts forth the essentials in simple and persuasive language.

Lewis' second favorite proof, the argument from reason, appears in his book *Miracles*. A certain kind of naturalism, he observes, characterizes rational thinking as a mere product of nervous reflexes, instincts, and habits. Lewis replies that physical or psychological conditioning cannot explain our power to make judgments about truth and error. We are conscious that our judgments are determined not by subrational forces but by reality as it impinges on our minds. The power to reach understanding through rational explanations is evidence of an affinity between the mind and reality. It is explicable only if there is an aboriginal mind that accounts for both intelligence and intelligibility.

Lewis' sketchy presentation of this argument leaves further work to be done. Having an ancestry that goes all the way back through Plato to Anaxagoras, it resembles the argument for the existence of God proposed in highly technical terms by Bernard Lonergan and popularized in several apologetical works of Hugo Meynell. For all these authors the wonderful correspondence between reason and reality implies that reality is imbued with an order that stems from a creative Mind. Lewis' focus is not so much on the intelligibility of the world as on the mind's capacity for truth, which in his opinion cannot be explained by natural selection but only by an intelligent Creator.

Lewis' third argument is taken from the natural desire for union with God. The idea that the human soul is naturally drawn to such a blessed union is pervasive in the Christian tradition. Augustine put it in classic form when he exclaimed in the *Confessions*: "You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts cannot find rest until they rest in you." This desire for God was not proposed in the form of a proof, it would seem, until the twentieth century. Influenced by the Belgian Jesuit Joseph Maréchal, the French Jesuit Henri de Lubac and the German Jesuit Karl Rahner made it their primary proof for the existence of God. Lewis was apparently unfamiliar with these continental authors, but he may well have found the makings of his own argument in the Anglican theologian Richard Hooker.

The argument unfolds in several steps. First, it must be established that all human beings have by nature a desire for something that transcends the whole of creation. According to Lewis, it is a secret desire that needs to be discovered, but one that each human being can discern by careful introspection. No earthly happiness can fully satisfy our hearts. The crux of the argument is the premise that no natural desire can be in vain. This proposition was accepted as self-evident by Aristotle and the entire Scholastic tradition, which subscribed to a teleological view of nature, but is rejected by empiricists, who protest that we lack sufficient materials to make this induction. Without delaying on the objection, Lewis draws the conclusion that God must exist, for otherwise the desire would be in vain and would have no attainable object.

In his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis designates this longing by the German name *Sehnsucht* and analyzes it in highly experiential terms. This unsatisfied desire, he remarks, is more desirable than any earthly satisfaction. For a while he so enjoyed the desire, he confesses, that he almost lost sight of the divine Object, but he overcame this subjectivism with the help of the idealist philosopher Samuel Alexander. In the end he came to realize that it was less a case of his pursuing the Object than of the Object's pursuing him.

Lewis was convinced that his arguments, especially when taken in convergence, established the existence of a personal God who is the source of morality, rationality, and spiritual joy. God stands above and beyond the whole of creation as its eternal ground. This idea of God, he claims, is far more plausible than pantheism, which so intermingles God and the world that God could not exist unless it did. After having dallied for a while with a kind of Hegelian pantheism,

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Lewis came to realize that a God indistinct from the world could not be unconditionally true and good. The proofs we have summarized establish the existence of a God who is untouched by evil.

Lewis does not extensively discuss non-Christian religions. Once the option for religion has been made, the only serious alternatives are pantheism and monotheism. Hinduism, which represents pantheism at its best, fails to satisfy Lewis. Buddhism he writes off rather casually as a Hindu heresy. A choice must therefore be made among the great theistic religions—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity—and if one can show that Christianity is divinely revealed, then it must be the choice. Other religions can be true only to the extent that they are compatible with it. Christians are not bound to regard other faiths as false except at those points where they conflict with Christian faith.

To establish the fact of Christian revelation, Lewis pursues two lines of argument. His first approach is from the claims of Christ. In a trilemma borrowed from G.K. Chesterton he asserts that anyone who claims to be God must be a lunatic, a liar, or, in fact, God; since Jesus, who made divine claims, was neither a liar nor a madman, therefore he was God. Lewis knows, of course, that the argument is not that simple. Nearly everyone will concede that Jesus was neither a lunatic nor a deceiver, but Lewis wants to make the adversaries explain why, after asserting that Jesus was sane and good, they deny his divinity.

The main difficulty, of course, is to establish that Jesus in fact claimed to be God. He may not have said bluntly, "I am God," but according to the Gospels he spoke of himself as Son in a unique and transcendent sense. In a number of sayings Jesus clearly implies that the Son preexisted with the Father, is equal to the Father, and will return in glory at the end of time to judge all nations. Jesus also claims to forgive sins in his own name, an act admittedly reserved to God alone.

Lewis' second argument for the divinity of Christ is from miracles, a subject on which he wrote one of his most important apologetical books. The book is a very successful answer to authors such as Hume, who denied that historical accounts of physical miracles could be credible. Lewis in a long discussion of the laws of nature shows that such laws, far from precluding miracles, are necessary conditions for their possibility. If there were no regular laws of nature, miracles could not be recognized as exceptions and would lose their function as divine signs. Miracles are possible provided that such laws exist and provided also that God is not absolutely bound by the laws He has established. True, it would be unreasonable for God to suspend laws of nature in an arbitrary way, but it would make sense for Him to suspend them on occasion for adequate reasons such as the manifestation of the new order of salvation.

If miracles were haphazard events, reports about them might not be credible. But the biblical miracles, generally speaking, fall into a meaningful pattern, exhibiting the beneficent designs of God. All the biblical miracles lead up to, or attest to, the Incarnation, which Lewis describes as "the great miracle." Jesus' mastery over life and death and over the powers of nature is convincing evidence of his divinity.

After a survey of the miracles of the public life, Lewis devotes a chapter to the resurrection. As a sign and anticipation of the final Kingdom, the resurrection is eminently meaningful. All efforts to explain it away as hallucination or fabrication fall to the ground.

Lewis is well aware that his arguments from the claims of Jesus and from the biblical miracles presuppose the general reliabilty of the Gospel accounts. Although Lewis does not claim to be a specialist in New Testament criticism, he maintains that he is well qualified as a literary critic to distinguish between history, legend, and myth. The Gospels clearly belong to the genre of history. The skepticism of radical New Testament critics like Bultmann, he contends, has its roots in their philosophical commitments, not in the character of the texts.

Against modern critics who treat the Fourth Gospel as unhistorical, Lewis boldly counters: "My judgment as a literary critic . . . constrains me to think it at least as close to the facts as Boswell's *Johnson*." But he also says: "I could never see how one escaped the dilemma *aut deus aut malus homo* by confining oneself to the Synoptics."

The principal reason for Lewis' adherence to atheism as a young man was his conviction that there was too much evil and suffering in the world for it to be the work of a loving and all-powerful God. In the opening pages of *The Problem of Pain* he poses the problem of evil in starkest terms. But he argues that the experience of evil as a problem rests upon a prior awareness that there exists a higher order of justice. This inbuilt sense of what ought to be cannot be explained except as having been implanted in our hearts by a divine power.

Lewis does not pretend to give a rational solution to the problem of evil. The Book of Job reminds us that with our finite minds we cannot provide a theoretical solution. But for apologetics it suffices to show that the fact of evil does not positively disprove the existence of the biblical God. Lewis begins by refuting metaphysical dualism, which would hold that good and evil are equally primordial. From Augustine he takes the insight that evil is a parasite, not an original

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reality. All the things that enable a bad person to be bad are in themselves good things. An evil deity, if it existed, would have existence, intelligence, and will, and to that extent be good. Evil, therefore, is the perversion of a goodness prior to itself.

In a universe of finite things, Lewis maintains, some degree of evil is normal. Often enough, one entity achieves its proper good at the expense of another. The lion gets the meat it needs for its diet at the expense of the sheep. Does the sheep suffer? It certainly has sensations, but of a sheep's consciousness we know nothing. What appears to be animal suffering may not be suffering in any real sense. We must beware of falling into the "pathetic fallacy."

Evil in the sphere of human life admits of various explanations. In a social order, it is reasonable to suppose that just as human beings benefit from one another's achievements, they will have to suffer from the mistakes and failures of others. But such suffering, endured with patience, can make for spiritual growth. It is good that we may attain some degree of happiness on earth. The impossibility of attaining complete happiness here below is good in the sense that it helps us to keep our hopes concentrated on God and the life to come.

God could of course prevent any given mishap by a miracle. But miracles must in the nature of the case be rare. Frequent interventions from on high would destroy the order of nature and make it impossible for us to act meaningfully, since the consequences of our actions would be unforeseeable. We could not build or use machinery unless we could predict how it would function.

The evil in the world is vastly increased by human sin. The possibility of sin proves nothing against God's goodness, because unless it were possible, God could not obtain the free and loving obedience for which rational creatures are made. The power freely to choose good implies a corresponding power to choose evil. Unless we had some inclination toward evil, we would gain no merit in doing what is good.

When we violate God's law, we know that we deserve punishment. A God who is just cannot condone evil, allowing it to be committed with impunity. When God punishes evil, His punishments may be medicinal or simply retributive. In this life punishments serve to bring about repentance and reform. If sinners fail to respond, they will justly suffer retributive punishment in hell. The possibility of hell is a necessary implication of human freedom in a moral universe. But even if we could not see the logic of it, we would have to submit to the clear teaching of Our Lord on the subject.

The death of Christ on the Cross is under one aspect a terrible evil but, considered as a loving sacrifice, it is the supreme proof of God's love. Sufficient though it was to atone for the sins of the whole world, it does not save us without our consent. Just as we benefit from the redemptive sufferings of Christ, so too our own sufferings, offered up in the body of Christ which is the Church, can be redemptive. This last point, not mentioned in *The Problem of Pain*, became clear to Lewis at a later time.

In *The Great Divorce*, Lewis takes up the objection that the joy of the blessed in heaven would be spoiled if even a single soul were lost in hell. To this he replies that the loveless are not allowed to blackmail the universe. Hell cannot veto heaven. The souls in heaven may have pity in the active sense, but pity as a passion will cease.

With arguments such as these, Lewis feels that he has successfully made the case for letting God out of the dock. Indeed, the expression "God in the dock" is one coined by Lewis himself. Insightfully he remarks that while ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as an accused person approaches his judge, modern man has reversed the roles. Man sits on the bench and places God before him as the accused. "If God should have a reasonable defense for being the god who permits war, poverty, and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal."

Lewis was convinced of the imperative need for apologetics. A century ago, he said, the Church's task was to edify those who had been brought up in the faith, but her present task is chiefly to convert and instruct infidels. The Britain of his day, Lewis maintained, was as much part of the mission field as China.

While advocating a renewed apologetics, Lewis was also conscious of its limitations. The religious person, he said, knows God primarily through experiences of prayer, worship, and forgiveness, but these experiences can be communicated, if at all, in a language resembling that of poetry. Apologetics, as a form of controversy, has to use terms that are as univocal and definable as possible. The apologist is therefore in a situation comparable to that of a witness under cross-examination trying to defend the character of a friend. The circumstances make it almost impossible to convey one's real impression.

Notwithstanding these crippling limitations, apologetics can sometimes be relatively successful. The apologist's task is to gather and present evidence capable of persuading reasonable persons that the Christian religion ought to be accepted. Lewis maintains that no adult comes to believe Christianity without thinking that there are good grounds for holding it is true. But the assent that flows from apologetical argu-

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ments falls short of Christian faith. Apologetics, in Lewis' view, provides a road map, but the map is no substitute for the journey.

The relation between faith and reason becomes radically different once a person has made the act of faith. The believer enters into a personal relationship with God that involves far more than assent to propositions. He places total trust in God to such a point that he would continue to believe even if he ceased to see the reasons. Those who have experienced this interpersonal relationship know enough about God to trust Him even when He seems absent. On this ground Lewis defends what he calls "obstinacy in belief."

Lewis proposes a very interesting definition. "Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods." Arguments do not secure us against the fluctuations of our moods. Many saints have experienced dark nights in which their faith seems to be unsupported by valid reasons. Yet they cling to the God whose loving embrace they have felt. Lewis chronicles an experience of this kind in his *A Grief Observed*. His faith was severely tested by the early and painful death of his wife, but he did not succumb.

Did he change his position in this final book? Beversluis holds that he there confessed the failure of his lifelong enterprise as an apologist and that he never recovered his assurance that a rational case could be made for Christianity. With the vast majority of Lewis scholars, I am convinced of the opposite. In the preface to *The Problem of Pain* Lewis already recognized that no intellectual solution could suffice to overcome the doubts that would arise in situations of grief. During the first weeks after his wife's death he experienced this insufficiency, but in the end he came to see that God was weaning him from excessive earthly attachments and inadequate concepts so that he could fix his heart more purely on the divine reality itself—on the God who surpasses all that we can think or imagine about Him. After undergoing the painful process of purification, Lewis was confident of having grown in faith and in humility.

Lewis' eminent success as an apologist is due to several factors. A convert from atheism, he had experienced the difficulties from within and had discovered by experience what arguments could speak to the unbeliever. He had a great gift for debating and wrote in a pleasing English style, free of heavy and technical language. He handled profound problems in simple words that could be understood by readers with no special training. Gifted with a lively imagination, he had an extraordinary facility for finding apt analogies from common life to illustrate abstract philosophical points. He was humble and unpretentious, willing to recognize the limits of his own knowledge. He concentrated on basic Christian beliefs and usually managed to avoid involvement in intra-Christian controversies.

The limits of Lewis are the flip side of his merits. Speaking to a broad and unsophisticated audience, he did not satisfy the scruples of some academicians, who found that he oversimplified complex problems. Avoiding technical terminology, he often failed to make distinctions that would be necessary to do justice to the subject matter. Having embraced no particular philosophical system other than a vague sort of Platonism, he frequently argued without the rigor expected in professional philosophical and theological circles.

As an apologist, moreover, Lewis tends to concentrate on the rational element in the approach to faith. But as he indicates in his own conversion story, it is not we alone who find the true faith. The God for whom we are searching has to find us, and we have to let Him do so. To speak too much as though faith were the result of a process of reasoning is a hazard built into apologetics. If Lewis had been willing to venture more deeply into theological waters, he might have spoken more extensively about the role of God in the process of conversion. Theologians in the great tradition show that divine grace influences even our initial perception of the evidences for Christianity. God's love, at work in our hearts, often enables us to synthesize data that might otherwise appear meaningless. It gives us what some theologians call "the eyes of faith." For this reason the search for religious truth has to be accompanied by prayer.

As Lewis' greatest weakness, I would single out his lack of appreciation for the Church and the sacraments. In *Mere Christianity* he touches on baptism and Holy Communion only briefly, when discussing what we have to do once we have become Christians. He admits that he finds it rather odd that bodily acts of this kind should be the means of acquiring new life. But no doubt, he remarks, God likes material things such as food and drink. "It seems plain as a matter of history that He [Jesus] taught his followers that the new life was communicated in this way." Lewis seems content with this rather weak defense of the sacramental system. But in his later years he developed a deeper appreciation. Speaking of Holy Communion in his posthumously published *Letters to Malcolm*, he writes: "Yet I find no difficulty in believing that the veil between the worlds, nowhere else (for me) so opaque to the intellect, is nowhere else so thin and permeable to divine operation. Here a hand from the hid-

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den country touches not only my soul but my body. Here the prig, the don, the modern in me have no privilege over the savage or the child."

In *Surprised by Joy* Lewis mentions that in the first years after his conversion he started attending Sunday services at his parish church, but adds: "The idea of churchmanship was to me wholly unattractive. . . . I was deeply antiecclesiastical. . . . I had as little relish to be in the Church as in the zoo. It was, to begin with, a kind of collective; a wearisome 'get-together' affair. . . . To me, religion ought to have been a matter of good men praying alone and meeting by twos and threes to talk about spiritual matters. . . . Hymns were (and are) extremely disagreeable to me. Of all musical instruments I liked (and like) the organ least. I have, too, a sort of spiritual *gaucherie* which makes me unapt to participate in any rite."

These words, I believe, point to an individualistic and academic quality that affected Lewis' religion almost to the end of his life. His "mere Christianity" is a set of beliefs and a moral code, but scarcely a society. In joining the Church he made a genuine and honest profession of faith—but he did not experience it as entry into a true community of faith. He found it possible to write extensively about Christianity while saying almost nothing about the People of God, the structures of authority, and the sacraments.

My own experience has been different. In becoming a Catholic, I felt from the beginning that I was joining the communion of the saints, the body to which Augustine and Aquinas, Bernard and Ignatius, belonged. I found great joy at the sense of belonging to a body of believers that stretched across the globe. The sacramental system and the authority of pastors were (and are) for me among the most attractive features of Christianity.

Still, while wishing that Lewis had projected a more ecclesial vision of Christianity, I withdraw nothing that I have said about his merits. His courage in addressing real objections, together with his keen logic and appealing rhetoric, have won him an enduring place in the history of Christian apologetics. FT

Parable of the Birds

They might be swallows. Barely to be seen,
they come through what the combine left behind,
dispersed, discreet, below the radar screen
while burnished stubble gives them grain to find;

till suddenly, as though at some behest
we cannot hear but they innately share,
they've catapulted up and coalesced
before we know it, mustered in midair

in so close-knit a flock it's more a swarm.
Swung in a cluster, seized by one intent,
they could enact how scattered inklings form
the mass and movement of an argument,

or even how a poet's hunt for words
might arouse images at ease in sky.
Too neat a likeness? Defter yet, the birds
will take their bearings, never going high,

and glide, unshackled from similitude,
down to the next field for newer gleaning.
The landscape they blend into, finding food,
is one the restless eye still raids for meaning.

Robert B. Shaw

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The Pattern of Christian Truth

Timothy George

The "integration of faith and learning" makes for a nice mantra. You can find it in attractive brochures from innumerable Christian colleges, assuring prospective students—or, at least, their parents—that each of these schools has some vague connection to a religious tradition, that some kind of chapel program is still maintained, and that faculty members are not out-and-out atheists.

Unfortunately, that's about all it means. And the reason that the "integration of faith and learning" has become little more than a rhetorical gesture in the evangelical academy may be that the Bible itself has become marginalized within our academic discourse. This might seem an unlikely conclusion. In popular perceptions, evangelicals are quintessentially biblicistic, while most evangelical schools assert a fairly clear doctrine about the Bible. Wheaton College's statement of faith, for instance, reads: "We believe that God has revealed Himself and His truth in the created order, in the Scriptures, and supremely in Jesus Christ, and that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writing, so that they are fully trustworthy and of supreme and final authority in all they say."

As it happens, I am a Southern Baptist, and we Baptists can extol the Scriptures with the best of them. The Bible, we like to say, is inspired, infallible, inerrant; we love those "i" words, and we can add a few more if you like: immeasurable, inimitable, invincible. And yet, for all this, the Bible remains, in much of the evangelical world, an inert (a bad "i" word) artifact from antiquity. Too often we construe its authority as a kind of divine reference book, a sort of inspired manual, that can be understood quite apart from the Christian heritage of Bible-based theology and wisdom across the centuries.

If we are to talk meaningfully about the integration of faith and learning—the joining of Scripture and the disciplines at which a Christian college ought to aim—then we need to revisit the development of Christian doctrine. We need to discern "the pattern of Christian truth," to borrow a phrase H.E.W. Turner used as the title of an important book he published in the 1950s.

Turner was responding to *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, a book by the German scholar Walter Bauer, originally published in German in 1934. Bauer contended that what emerged as mainstream Christian orthodoxy in the second and third centuries was merely one strand of a very diffuse Christian movement and no more normative for the life of faith than the many other trajectories we can identify in apostolic and post-apostolic times. Bauer's thesis has, of course, become the reigning orthodoxy within the wider academy. Witness Elaine Pagel's books on gnosticism and the Gospel of Thomas—to say nothing of Dan Brown's blockbuster novel, *The Da Vinci Code*.

In response, Turner claimed there was a discernible pattern of Christian truth, a *pattern* derived from the apostolic witness and maintained across time as the *depositum fidei*, or what the New Testament calls "the faith once delivered to the saints." This pattern is embedded, like a genetic code, in the inspired text of Scripture itself. But only by having to confront counter-narratives—by having to respond to heresy—does the community of faith recognize this pattern with clarity and set forth creeds and confessions of faith to guard the integrity of its worship and proclamation.

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The word "heresy" dredges up the flames of Smithfield, the tortures of the Inquisition, and the *malleus mallificarum*. Indeed, heresy-hunting and witch-burning seem almost synonymous today. Yet the first generation of Christians—as the story is told in Galatians 1:9 and 1 John 4:1-3—found themselves confronted with an alternative pattern of teaching that they could not allow if they were to remain faithful to their Lord. This was not a conflict over secondary matters about which sincere Christians might differ—say, whether the third trumpet sounds before the forth seal is broken in the Book of Revelation. No, heresy is a deliberate perversion, a "choice" (*hairesis* in Greek), to break with the primary pattern of Christian truth and to promulgate a doctrine that undermines the gospel and destroys the unity of the Christian Church. A Church that cannot distinguish heresy from truth, or, even worse, a Church that no longer thinks this is worth doing, is a Church which has lost its right to bear witness to the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ who declared himself to be not only the Way and the Life, but also the Truth.

But there is a positive side to heresy as well—in the sense that the history of heresy is the shadow side of the development of doctrine. In the light of its corruption, we can see, retrospectively, the splendor and beauty of the divine revelation embedded in Holy Scripture. In its confrontation with heresiarchs, the Church learned to read the Scriptures in a way that should still inform us today.

Consider Marcion, for example. A ship builder born in Pontus, near the Black Sea, Marcion grew up in the Church, the son of a bishop. Having amassed great wealth, he migrated to Rome around 139 A.D., where he made a large donation to the Church. For five years he wrote and taught in Rome, gathering a following so large that, when he was excommunicated in 144, he is said to have carried half the Church with him.

According to Irenaeus, Marcion once encountered Polycarp of Smyrna on the streets of Rome and asked, "Do you know who I am?"—to which Polycarp replied, "I know the first-born of Satan." Marcion's aim was to pull Christianity out from its Jewish soil, and to do this he had to divide creation from redemption. The God of the Old Testament, Marcion said, is not the Father of Jesus (whom Marcion called instead "the Alien God"). The Jewish God was rather a kind of demiurge, like the one in Plato's *Timaeus*: a sort of divine craftsman who reshaped the primordial, chaotic matter of the universe.

Make no mistake: Marcion thought his demiurge a real god. It was that god who made a covenant with the Jews and gave them their law. He promised one day to send them a messiah, and he will keep the promise. But Jesus, Marcion says, is not that messiah. Jesus is instead the emissary of the Alien Father. Jesus came to offer an alternative way of salvation, one that bypassed the world of matter, the world of bugs and mosquitoes and crocodiles and vipers, the world of birth and begetting, of sexuality and marriage. Jesus did not experience a natural, human birth: "Away," Marcion said, "with that poor inn, those mean swaddling clothes, and that rough stable." The true Christ could not have assumed a material body that participated in the created world, for such a body would have been "stuffed with excrement." Significantly, Marcion would admit married persons to baptism in his church only if they took a vow to abstain from all sexual intercourse. Sex was anathema because of—not in spite of—procreation, since the material body was a curse and an indignity.

Marcion shared his docetism and anti-materialism with the gnostics of his day, but he had a different, more radical, way of justifying his beliefs. Early on, many Christian interpreters resorted to non-literal and allegorical readings of the Old Testament, especially of such difficult passages as the imprecatory psalms. Marcion, however, urged the rejection of the entire Old Testament. God's dealings with humankind through Christ stood in no relation to any previous dispensation but were radically new and radically other. Having rejected the Old Testament as legitimate Scripture for Christians, Marcion concocted his own alternative, a two-part document consisting of an "Evangelium" and an "Apostolicum." The "Evangelium" was an expurgated version of Luke that omitted the messy birth narratives, while the "Apostolicum" was a carefully edited version of ten of Paul's epistles. (Unlike his gnostic contemporaries, Marcion claimed no private tradition of secret sayings or oral transmissions.)

In responding to Marcion, the Church reaffirmed two principles of primary importance in the pattern of Christian truth. Indeed all subsequent theology is to some degree a working out of these two principles: the coinherence of creation and redemption, and the fundamental continuity of the Old and New Testaments.

While the process of canon formation required several centuries of controversy, debate, and assessment—as the Church sorted through the challenge not only of Marcion who wanted to truncate the canon, but also of others, such as the Montanists, who tried to expand it—the fundamental direction of this process was set in the context of the earlier debate. Insofar as we orthodox Christians today accept the Scriptures as a discrete corpus of inspired writings, we do so because we stand on this side of the great divide of the second century's battle for the Bible.

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If Marcion taught the Church one lesson about what Christianity was *not*, Arius taught us another in the fourth century. One question—How is Jesus of Nazareth related to the God who created all things other than Himself by His almighty, sovereign power?—was at the heart of the struggle between Arius, a presbyter in the church of Alexandria, and his bishop Athanasius.

Arius had a serious theological point: God's innermost being or essence, he said, cannot be shared, or communicated, with anyone else. "We know," he declared, "there is one God, alone unbegotten, alone eternal, alone without beginning, alone true, alone immortal." God is thus utterly transcendent, self-sufficient, and all-powerful. What's more, this God guards His divinity jealously—a parsimonious God, a God so self-contained in isolation and absoluteness that the very thought of sharing His "essence" with anyone, even with a "Son," is abhorrent to Him.

Against this view, Athanasius and the orthodox fathers who gathered at the Council of Nicea in 325 declared their belief "in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father." If Jesus was not one substance with the Father, the council said, then he was neither worthy to be worshiped nor capable of redeeming the world.

Arius had ridiculed the idea that God could "beget a son," as unitarianism of every kind has always done. But Athanasius, and the theologians in the Nicene tradition who followed him, sought to explain the "begottenness" of the Son in a way that avoided both the sterility of Arius' God and the crass literalism derived from Greek mythology. The Nicene formula described the Son as being both the *same* in substance with the Father and also in some way *distinct* from the Father: He was God *from* God, Light *from* Light, very God *from* very God.

The challenge was to explain this "fromness" without violating the sameness. This they did by declaring that the Son was begotten—but not in the way human fathers beget or generate their earthly children. The Son of the heavenly Father was begotten from all eternity. He did not "come to be" at a point in time, but from eternity the Father and the Son exist in a relation of total and mutual self-giving. Thus, far from compromising God's fundamental reality, communicability and relationship are constitutive of it. This is what the Bible means when it declares that "God is love."

It is often said that the doctrine of the Trinity was the result of Christian capitulation to Greek philosophy. In fact, it was the exact opposite. Arius was the one who pushed the implications of philosophical monism and consequently had to portray Christ in mythological terms as neither God nor human, but rather a sort of demi-god who, though the most exalted of all creatures, was still only a creature.

The doctrine of the Trinity belongs to the pattern of Christian truth because without it we cannot really understand the narrative of Jesus as the story of God, and if the story of Jesus is ultimately anything other than the story of God, there is no Gospel. The doctrine of the Trinity is necessary for understanding the Bible's overarching account of what God has said and done in history. Such a framework makes the Scriptures not just a disparate collection of interesting documents from the world of antiquity, but one single unitary *Bible*. It allows us to use the word "Scripture" as a singular, collective noun. This is a lesson Arius has helped us to learn.

Both Marcion and Arius were from the East. For a final example of the usefulness of heretics in forcing us to understand the pattern of Christian truth, we must turn to a Western heretic: Pelagius. Born around 350 in the British Isles, at the very edge of what was then the civilized world, Pelagius had piercing eyes, red hair, and carried the family name of Morgan, facts which have led some to think he may have come from Ireland. In any event, he had the scent of Celtic asceticism about him and when he moved to Rome he was deeply offended by the laxity he saw among Christians there.

He was especially infuriated when he overheard Augustine's prayer, *Domine, da quod iubes et iube quod vis*: "O Lord, give what You command, and command whatever You will." This kind of devotion, Pelagius thought, undercut the moral nerve of Christian faith. If we are not able to obey God's commandments by ourselves, then why had He given them in the first place? Salvation must come from the performance of good works and the fulfillment of obligations laid down by God.

Pelagian theology begins with the notion that Adam was created mortal: he would have died even if he had never sinned. Thus, we do not inherit death from Adam as the punishment for sin. Nor do we inherit the sin itself. According to Pelagius, sin is transmitted by imitation, not propagation. Human beings are born without sin, and they commit sins only by following the bad examples of others.

This means that grace is not opposed to nature but rather is present within nature itself. With the law in

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the Old Testament and Christ in the New, God has given us the perfect rulebook and the perfect rulekeeper, but nothing more—for salvation, like sin, is by imitation. This means that perfection in this life is possible. Pelagius did not say it was easy. He did not claim to be perfect himself. But he did believe that, in addition to Jesus, there were perfect people who always obeyed all of God's commands. It is the worst kind of defeatism, he thought, to tell Christians in advance that perfection was unattainable. Indeed, for Pelagius, predestination is subordinate to foreknowledge: when the Bible speaks of God's predestination of the elect, it is merely speaking of His ability to see into the future and ratify in advance what He knows human beings will do by their own efforts.

In the course of the Pelagian controversy, St. Augustine answered that Pelagius had turned the whole of Christian theology upside down. Death is not natural but radically inimical to human life, an "enemy" to be overcome, as St. Paul put it. The moment Adam sinned, he began "verging toward old age and death." Developing a robust doctrine of original sin, which emphasized the seminal and corporate identity of the human family, Augustine argued that the human situation is far more serious than Pelagius allowed. Only a supernatural work of God, which comes to sinners from beyond themselves, can make any real difference in our standing before a holy God. Christians can indeed make great progress in their walk with God, and they should be encouraged to do so, but sin is an ever-present reality with which we must struggle until we draw our last breath. Thus every day we need to offer again this petition from the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses."

Following Paul, Augustine grounds predestination in God's *eudokia*, his "good pleasure," as the King James version translates that term in Ephesians 1:5. It is important to note that Augustine affirms the intactness of human free will even after the Fall: it is still we who act and love and choose, and we who are therefore responsible morally for what we do. But the will has become so thoroughly susceptible to pride and self-seeking that it is disposed now to choose objects of desire that lead it further and further away from God. In other words, human free will has been so weakened by sin and the Fall that it has become, as Luther would say, *incurvatus in se*—"curved in on itself," like a coil or a spring. We are *liberi, sed non liberati*—"free, but not freed." Augustine knew that we were created by God for fellowship with Him, and that our hearts would always be restless until they found true rest in Him. But this kind of reorientation required *gratia operans*, the operation of divine grace. As Jesus says in John 15:5 (one of Augustine's favorite Bible verses): "Apart from me you can do nothing."

Even though Pelagius was condemned as a heretic at the Council of Ephesus in 431, one year after Augustine's death, his ideas continue to influence the way we understand the human situation, not only in the optimistic anthropology of liberal Protestantism and the lingering semi-Pelagianism of some Roman Catholics, but also in a sort of "can-do" evangelicalism, which stresses positive-thinking and self-improvement. Benjamin B. Warfield may have been right when he said that the Reformation was the triumph of Augustine's theology of grace over his doctrine of the Church, but in a broader sense *sola gratia* is the common heritage of both historic Protestantism and faithful Catholicism, just as it is the shared confession of both classical Calvinism and the Arminianism of John Wesley. These are lessons Pelagius has helped us to learn.

If the Church's response to these three heretics constitutes part of the permanent, irreducible, and irreversible pattern of Christian truth, then this has important implications for Christian scholars in all disciplines. We are not free to throw in a gnostic gospel or two—or to delete embarrassing miracles or "doubtful" Jesus sayings—and regard our new configuration as having the same valence as the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. Nor can we present Jesus of Nazareth as merely one savior among many, or the way of salvation as a form of self-enhancement.

As Christians who accept the Church's *regula fidei* and who stand Sunday after Sunday to recite the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, we are not free to view the Bible as though we had it at our disposal, as though we ourselves were not claimed by its story, as though we had already mastered this ancient document and could now move on to other bodies of knowledge without the discernment we have learned from Scripture. When Calvin began his *Institutes* with the sentence, "Nearly all the wisdom we possess consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves," he didn't mean that we should first earn a Ph.D. in systematic theology, and then, with the knowledge of God safely under our belt, switch disciplines and go on to earn a second Ph.D. in, say, psychology. The *duplex cognitio* Calvin refers to is not sequential but correlative: we cannot know ourselves without knowing that we are at once finite and fallen creatures of God. Nor can we know God without knowing ourselves as persons made in His image, as objects of His judgment and love.

This is not to say, of course, that we cannot learn a great deal about the world of nature and history and science and politics and art quite apart from the story

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of God and His creatures as it is told in the Bible and confessed in the creeds of the Christian faith. Of course, we can and we must. But as believing scholars committed to the pattern of Christian truth, we must never forget that the usefulness of such abstract knowledge is limited. By itself, abstraction will always lead us away from what is truly real. Divorced from the biblical narrative, a purely abstract knowledge becomes not only self-referential but also self-defeating, fatuous, and sterile. It, too, will curve back in on itself.

As the noted theologian Robert Jenson once put it: "Scripture's story is not part of some larger narrative; it is itself the larger narrative of which all other true narratives are parts. And so do not when reading Scripture try to figure out how what you are reading fits into some larger story; for there *is* no larger story." This is true whether we are talking about biology, political science, or aesthetics. Disconnected from the biblical story, such disciplines can tell us how things work but not what they are for; how to clone a human baby but not whether this should be done; how to construct an atomic bomb but not whether it should be used; how to build a maximum security prison but not how to treat the prisoners. Without some teleology, there is no flourishing and no future for the human community.

This way of reading the Bible has important implications for the various disciplines. Against Marcion the Church decided to retain the Old Testament as Christian Scripture and rejected his division of creation and redemption. In doing so, it validated what we might call the principle of luminous particularity, the principle that no object in nature, and no event in history, is an isolated, opaque fact closed in on itself. Each is, rather, a translucent window onto a whole pattern of human experience. This means that we must approach the world with a profound respect for the numinous character that it possesses—not because it is some kind of earth goddess, but by virtue of its having been created by the triune God.

In its struggle with Arius, the Church affirmed the central axiom of the Christian faith, summarized by St. John in the prologue to his gospel: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The Church has always had to insist on the reality of the Incarnation against docetists, neoplatonists, and deists of all kinds, against the kind of God Thomas Hardy described as "a dreaming, dark, dumb Thing that turns the handle of this idle show." This hideous caricature is widely accepted in today's world and is at the root of much contemporary atheism. Against all of this the Church echoes the language of Scripture and declares, in the words of Ignatius of Antioch, that Jesus Christ was *truly* born, *truly* lived, *truly* died, and *truly* rose—*altheos, altheos, altheos*, the Greek adverb resounding like a gong through the debates of the early Church.

Finally, from the struggle with Pelagius, we learn the practice of humility before the mystery of the holy. Augustine discerned in Pelagius the same scorning of humility that he had witnessed among the neoplatonists. This is an occupational hazard for all of us who stand with one foot in *ecclesia*, and the other in *schola*. We may be Augustinians in our theology, but we are all socialized to be Pelagians in our profession, to exaggerate the importance of personal effort and personal worthiness. We drill this into our children and students from kindergarten on. As a dean who recommends colleagues for promotion and tenure in one institution, and as a trustee who votes on such recommendations in another, I know all too well the institutional constraints that reinforce this kind of academic pelagianism from which none of us is exempt.

Augustine made a distinction between a way of knowing he called *scientia*—the image of a man hanging off a cliff by his fingernails, frenetically digging and scratching, straining every nerve until his fingernails are embedded with the dirt and blood of his exertion. He said there is another way of knowing, *sapientia*: wisdom. And this often comes to us as an unexpected insight. In such moments cognition becomes recognition and you know that this is not achievement but gift. This is the kind of knowledge that generates humility before the mystery of the holy.

Augustine has not been very well received in the East, but I think he would like this statement from Theaphon the Recluse, a Russian Orthodox bishop of the nineteenth century: "The principal thing is to stand before God with intellect in the heart, and to go on standing before Him unceasingly day and night, until the end of life." In such a summons to humility we find the implicit covenant of all our dialogues, and our vocation as followers of the Lamb and students in the school of Christ. FT

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Crusaders and Historians

Thomas F. Madden

The Crusades have been a topic of intense scholarly investigation for the last forty years. Some of the best historians in the world have focused their efforts on learning how the Crusade movement, unique in human history, could have developed and flourished in medieval Europe. In thousands of journal articles and scholarly monographs Christianity's holy wars have been probed, analyzed, and debated. Much still remains to be done, but the fruits of all of this research cannot be denied. We now know much more than ever before about the Crusades.

Unfortunately, little of this has reached a general audience—leaving the field to novelists, journalists, or anyone else with a desire to sell books. And make no mistake: The Crusades have always been of interest to readers, and since the attacks of September 11, histories of the Crusades have been in very high demand. For instance, Karen Armstrong—an ex-nun who reissues her book *Holy War* whenever trouble is brewing in the Middle East—wasted no time adding a new introduction and getting the book back into bookstores within months of the attacks. Innumerable other popular books were quickly cobbled together, mostly cribbed from Steven Runciman's *History of the Crusades*—a beautifully written book, but one that is now more than fifty years old and thus does not take account of more recent scholarship. Runciman delivers the expected story: The Crusades were a series of brutal wars of intolerance in which the cynical, voracious, superstitious, and gullible waged insensible war against a peaceful, sophisticated Muslim world, crushing the opulent Byzantine Empire in the bargain.

The First Crusade: A New History
By Thomas Asbridge
Oxford University Press
408 pp. $35.

The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople
By Johnathan Phillips
Viking
374 pp. $25.95.

Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades
By Christopher Tyerman
Oxford University Press
247 pp. $24.29.

Frustrated with the ways in which the Crusades have been used and distorted, a few historians are now attempting to close the yawning gap between the academy and general readers. Among the new crop of histories are Thomas Asbridge's *The First Crusade: A New History*, Jonathan Phillips' *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*, and Christopher Tyerman's *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades*. All three of these writers are distinguished historians. All three seek to bring the fruits of decades of scholarship to a popular audience. And all three are keenly aware that in the process they are smashing many cherished myths.

Take, for example, what might be called the Myth of the Greedy Younger Son. This myth holds that an increase in population, the development of feudal primogeniture, and a series of bad harvests created a situation in medieval Europe where thousands of well-

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trained and land-hungry warriors were milling about with nothing to do. Rather than have them make trouble at home, Pope Urban II convinced them to carve out territories for themselves in the faraway Muslim world. This myth more closely resembles the world of nineteenth-century colonialism than it does the Middle Ages. New research has definitively shown that Crusaders were predominantly the first sons of Europe: wealthy, privileged, and pious. Crusading was extremely expensive and more than a few noble families risked bankruptcy in order to take part. They did so for medieval, not modern, reasons. Crusading for them was an act of love and charity by which, like the Good Samaritan, they were aiding their neighbors in distress. Muslim warriors had conquered eastern Christians, taken their lands, and in some cases killed or enslaved them. The Crusader believed it was his duty to right that wrong.

The Greedy Younger Son is not the only myth historians have discarded. It may surprise some to learn that the Crusades were almost never profitable, since booty was so scarce. Or that the Christian settlers in the so-called Crusader Kingdom were not themselves Crusaders. Or that the Crusades met all the criteria of a just war, especially in their defensive nature. Or that the Crusades had nothing at all to do with colonialism. Or that the Crusades were in no way wars of conversion. Or that the Crusades were not related to Muslim jihad (except insofar as they were a defense against it). Or that the Muslim world knew nothing at all about the Crusades before the nineteenth century.

If your image of Western civilization relies on a depiction of the Crusades as an insane and bloodthirsty attack on a peaceful and sophisticated Muslim world, then you are not going to like what recent historians have to say. This is apparent in some of the responses to these new works. In a *New Yorker* review of the books by Asbridge and Phillips, the journalist Joan Acocella seemed a little miffed by what she found coming out of the academy. How can two professional historians talk of piety, devotion, and selflessness as Crusader motivations? "Does this mean that Asbridge and Phillips think the Crusades were OK?" she asks incredulously. No, it means they think it is their job as historians to uncover the truth. Acocella speaks approvingly of the much older works by Runciman and John Julius Norwich, who is no historian. The entry of scholars into popular Crusade history does not seem to be welcomed in all quarters.

As the title suggests, Thomas Asbridge's *The First Crusade: A New History* begins at the beginning. The First Crusade was called in 1095 by Pope Urban II in response to an urgent plea for assistance from the Byzantine Empire, the last Christian state in the East. Things had been going badly for Christians for several centuries, ever since the explosion of Muslim warriors out of Arabia in the seventh century. Egypt, Palestine, Syria, North Africa—the core of the Christian world—had been conquered by Muslim jihad warriors and subjected to Islamic rule and law. When Turkish jihad warriors invaded and conquered Asia Minor, they reduced Christendom to a tiny corner of the world.

Urban took the plight of Eastern Christians and the continued subjugation of the Holy Land to the knights of Europe; he asked them to take up the cross and turn back these conquests as an act of penance. Thousands responded. The First Crusade, which was, in typical medieval fashion, governed by a committee of barons, marched thousands of miles across eastern Europe, crossed the Bosporus at Constantinople, and then pushed on to Nicaea, which served as the capital of the Turkish sultanate. After restoring Nicaea to the Byzantine emperor, the Crusaders crossed Anatolia and against all odds restored to Christian control the city of Antioch, one of the ancient patriarchates of Christianity. The Crusaders also acquired nearby Edessa and then continued south along the coast until they finally turned inland and caught their first glimpse of the holy city of Jerusalem. After prayers, penances, and many hardships, they captured it in July 1099.

The modern historian can only marvel at the First Crusade. I know of no other instance in human history in which so many soldiers marched thousands of miles from their home and endured numerous hardships deep in enemy territory for no good strategic or economic reasons. Their reasons had much more to do with the next world than with this one. It is equally amazing that a loosely organized enterprise like this with no clear understanding of the local terrain or sure means of provisioning could so often snatch victory from the jaws of apparent defeat. As Asbridge notes, "Modern historical analysis can offer a rationalization of their accomplishments, but for contemporaries living in the medieval age one thing alone explained the spectacular triumph of the First Crusade—God's omnipotent will."

Asbridge's history works well on many levels. He tells his story vividly, but he does not shy away from details that may muddy his otherwise clear picture. When a scholarly debate exists on a point, he brings it up forthrightly and describes it succinctly. Throughout his narrative he liberally sprinkles footnotes that direct interested readers to the best scholarship available. With knowledge of medieval siege weapons, armor, and basic army conditions, Asbridge argues that the internal command of the First Crusade was not as frac-

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tious as historians have generally believed. What really adds depth and color to this history, though, is Asbridge's familiarity with the region and the careful attention with which he describes it. Readers see the landscapes and fortifications through the eyes of someone who has studied them closely.

Among the most contentious issues in scholarly circles are those that touch on the origin of the Crusades. In the 1930s Carl Erdmann argued that the Crusades came out of a larger ecclesiastical reform movement in Europe that sought to reign in and control warriors. Urban II, Erdmann argued, used the Byzantine plea for aid as a means to harness Europe's military energy for Church purposes, and also as a means to convince the Byzantine Christians to accept papal primacy. It was, he claimed, popular sentiment that eventually expanded the mission to include Jerusalem.

Response to the "Erdmann Thesis" has been varied, with some historians accepting it in a modified form and others rejecting it. Asbridge cannot avoid presenting his own judgment, and it is here I have difficulties with his approach. Asbridge's Urban II, much like Erdmann's, is a schemer whose primary motivation is to exert his own power. There was, Asbridge contends, no compelling external reason for the First Crusade. One would think the Muslim conquest of fully two-thirds of the Christian world might engender some bad feeling, but Asbridge insists, "All around the Mediterranean basin, Christian faith and society survived and even thrived under the watchful but tolerant eye of Islam. Eastern Christendom may have been subject to Islamic rule, but it was not on the brink of annihilation, nor prey to any form of systematic abuse."

What of the recent Muslim conquest of Asia Minor? Asbridge does not consider it worth mentioning. And what of the Byzantine plea for assistance? Asbridge concedes that it "may have stimulated, at least in part," the pope's call for a Crusade, but since he ignores the reason for the urgent request, he quickly drops the request itself. Having discounted or ignored all external reasons for the First Crusade, Asbridge is free to conclude that Urban's call was "primarily proactive rather than reactive, and the Crusade was designed, first and foremost, to meet the needs of the papacy." Caught in a struggle with the German emperors over investiture, the pope must have conceived the Crusade plan as "an attempt to consolidate papal empowerment and expand Rome's sphere of influence."

This argument would be stronger if the pope had sought to raise an army to attack his German enemies rather than sending his supporters thousands of miles from home. Asbridge goes beyond Erdmann in claiming there had been a full schism between Rome and Constantinople since 1054. Yet no other historian accepts this. The enthusiastic response of the Western knights is just one of many pieces of evidence which suggest that, despite some friction, Christians did not recognize a schism even as late as 1095. Asbridge, holding to his claim about the schism, argues that the pope had to convince the knights in his sermon at Clermont that the Byzantines were not schismatics hated for two generations but really "blood brothers." Urban's reports of Muslim atrocities, Asbridge contends, "had little or no basis in fact, but they did serve Urban's purpose." The pope instituted a "denigration and dehumanization of Islam" to convince the Christian warriors that the Crusade was no "shameful war of equals between God's children" but a righteous thing.

Asbridge's assessment of Urban credits the pope with far more foresight and rhetorical authority than he had. It also ignores the real danger that Islamic expansionism posed to the survival of Christendom. Nevertheless, when Asbridge gets beyond his discussion of Urban's motivations, *The First Crusade* provides a first-rate description of the course and consequences of that initial moment in the Crusades. It is a story not to be missed.

It was in the eighteenth century that historians began to number the Crusades and, for good or ill, the convention stuck. There was a Second Crusade, led by two kings and preached by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. It failed dramatically—which is perhaps why it has never received much attention. The Third Crusade, on the other hand, has always attracted interest, for it pitted Richard the Lionheart against Saladin in a fight to the finish for Jerusalem itself. The Fourth Crusade is a different story altogether. Ranking as one of the oddest expeditions in medieval history, the Fourth Crusade has been a favorite topic among scholars and popular authors alike. How can one not stare in wonder at a Crusade that was organized to rescue Jerusalem and ended up devastating Constantinople, the greatest Christian city in the world?

The Fourth Crusade was the brainchild of an energetic young pope, Innocent III (1198-1216). Innocent was determined to launch a new Crusade to reconquer Jerusalem, which had been in Muslim hands since 1187. After some initial delays, recruitment for the Crusade picked up in earnest in France, crystallizing around a few powerful barons. In order to avoid trouble with the Byzantine Christians, who were by now no longer so happy to have Crusade armies marching across their fields and meadows, they decided to sail to the Holy Land. But there was a problem: The barons had no boats. To remedy this they gave blank parchments (the medieval equivalent of blank checks) to six agents and sent them out to contract a fleet.

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In 1201 the six went to Venice where boats were, of course, plentiful. The Venetians, led by their aged and blind Doge Enrico Dandolo, agreed to join the Crusade themselves with a fleet of war galleys. In addition they agreed to provide transportation and provisions for all of the French Crusaders and their horses for one year. Since much of the fleet would have to be constructed, the Venetians naturally needed to know how many Crusaders it would transport—a question for which the agents did not have a good answer. Taking a guess, the agents ordered transportation and provisions for 33,500 men and 4,500 horses. The pope confirmed the contract and all was in readiness for the Crusade.

A year passed and the Venetian people fulfilled their end of the contract to the letter. A vast fleet and tons of provisions stood ready. Yet the Crusaders were not so conscientious. It must be remembered that a Crusade was an amalgamation of many different military groups, who were not bound by the oaths sworn by powerful barons. If those groups could find cheaper or more convenient transportation in other ports, there was nothing to stop them from taking advantage of it.

This was bad news for the main body of the Crusade. With so many leaving from other ports, only about 12,000 showed up in Venice. That meant the Crusaders could not pay for the fleet, while the Venetians, who had poured enormous resources into the project, could not renounce payment. A stalemate ensued that lasted throughout the summer of 1202. Finally, the Venetians agreed to loan the money to the Crusaders in return for their assistance in subduing Zara, a rebellious city on the Dalmatian coast. The Crusaders agreed. But Zara was not only a Catholic town; its nominal ruler, the king of Hungary, had taken the Crusader's vow and therefore his lands were under the protection of the Church. With the only alternative being the dissolution of the Crusade, the Crusaders attacked and conquered Zara—whereupon the whole Fourth Crusade was excommunicated.

In time the French Crusaders received papal absolution for their part in the business at Zara, but the Venetians did not. Nevertheless, in spring 1203 the Crusade was again ready to sail—or almost ready. There was the problem that only a few months remained on their lease of the vessels. There was also the problem that they had eaten all of their provisions.

At this point a young Byzantine prince stepped into the unfolding drama. Young Alexius Angelus was the son of Emperor Isaac II Angelus, who had been blinded and deposed by his brother, the current Emperor Alexius III Angelus. The young man claimed, plausibly enough, that his uncle was a usurper and that the people of Constantinople longed to be free of his tyranny. If the Crusaders would champion the young man's righteous cause by bringing him to the imperial city, the Byzantine people would respond by overthrowing the tyrant and restoring to the young Alexius Angelus his rightful throne. In return for this act of charity, the young man promised oceans of riches, thousands of troops to join the Crusade, and the subjugation of the Byzantine Church to the pope in Rome. With much dissent in the ranks, the Crusade leaders accepted the deal.

When the Crusaders arrived at Constantinople they were surprised to discover that they were not hailed as liberators. Greeks wanted no Westerners telling them who to have as their emperor. After a brief attack on the city, though, Emperor Alexius III fled. So the young man was finally crowned as Alexius IV. But he could only come up with half of what he owed the Crusaders, and his unpopularity among his subjects made him fear for his life. So the Crusaders agreed to remain at Constantinople over the winter in order to give the new emperor time to consolidate his power and come up with the remainder of their reward. But Alexius IV did not survive the winter. A palace coup toppled him, putting on the throne the anti-Latin candidate, Alexius V Mourtzouphlus. Faced with this treachery and betrayal, the Crusaders decided to attack Constantinople once again. In April 1204 they entered the city, captured it, and put it to the sack. Later Baldwin of Flanders was elected the first emperor of the Latin Empire of Constantinople. Thus ended the Fourth Crusade, having never reached Jerusalem.

Popular accounts of the Fourth Crusade have traditionally painted it in the darkest, most anti-Western colors. Those who think little of the papacy or the Catholic Church can blame Pope Innocent III. While it is true that the pope had thrice forbidden the Crusaders to sail to Constantinople, demanded that they do no harm to Christians, and bitterly rebuked them for the sack of the city, one could dismiss these protestations as merely "for the record." Deep in his heart, it has been argued, Innocent wanted the Crusade to conquer Constantinople. Many have also blamed the Venetians. Venice, you see, was a city of merchants. Surely, no flame of piety, idealism, or self-sacrifice could burn in the cold hearts of its citizens. Doge Enrico Dandolo, it is said, feigned devotion to the Cross, but in truth he sought a way to harness the holy enterprise for his own profane goals. Although Venice did an enormous amount of very lucrative business in Constantinople, many authors have insisted that bringing a war to Venice's closest trading partner did, in fact, make good business sense.

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During the last thirty years historians have learned much more about this complex Crusade. We now know that there was no secret villain scheming to divert the Crusade. Instead, there were many actors and accidents that led the enterprise step by step to a conclusion that no one wanted or could have foreseen. That story has been told in scholarly monographs, but until the publication of Jonathan Phillips's *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*, it hadn't appeared in an accessible, popular style.

Having devoted much of my professional career to the study of the Fourth Crusade, I am a tough critic when it comes to this subject. I have never read a popular treatment of this Crusade that is not riddled with errors of fact and laughable assumptions. That is, until now. Phillips' book is a story well told, and the story is all the better for being true. Phillips has no need for made-up villains or half-baked conspiracies in order to craft a compelling and exciting read.

Based on the best research and a thorough reading of the primary texts, Phillips uses the Fourth Crusade as a gateway to the Middle Ages. It is a teaching tool, a way of introducing the general public to a world very different from our own. He cleverly engages his readers' interest and imagination by finding apt modern analogies. Consider this description of medieval sea travel: "Three-decked versions of the round ship were approximately 110 feet long and 32 feet wide. In comparison, a modern airplane such as an Airbus A320 is 120 feet long and its fuselage is about 16 feet wide. It carries up to 150 passengers and eight crew on flights of (usually) no more than four-and-a-half hours' duration. By the end of such a flight, most passengers are cramped and fidgety. As we look over a medieval ship, perhaps the equivalent of a jet as the main mode of transport, and consider that journeys lasted many weeks, such figures are sobering."

Rather than discussing one of the Crusades, Christopher Tyerman uses his recent book to treat the entire Crusading movement. His approach in *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades* is not chronological but conceptual. He means for this book to be a "brief introduction" to the "history and historiography of the Crusades and what could be called their post-history."

Given the lack of footnotes or comprehensive bibliography, Tyerman clearly intends *Fighting for Christendom* for a popular audience. Yet, unlike Asbridge and Phillips, he makes no attempt to introduce his reader to the medieval world; nor, for that matter, does he provide them with much information about the Crusades themselves. In a book of almost 250 pages, Tyerman devotes only thirty-two to the events of all the Crusades. The descriptions are so schematic that they would be useful only as a refresher for those already familiar with the campaigns. Those seeking an accessible general introduction to the Crusades will not find it here.

Like most Crusade historians, Tyerman is frustrated by the image of the Crusades in the popular media. "Most of what passes in public as knowledge of the Crusades is either misleading or false," he writes. "The Crusades were not solely wars against Islam in Palestine. They were not chiefly conducted by land-hungry younger sons, nor were they part of some early attempt to impose Western economic hegemony on the world. More fundamentally, they did not represent an aberration from Christian teaching."

All of this is quite true. Yet Tyerman's frustration can sometimes lead to splenetic rants. When decrying pseudo-histories of the Knights Templar, Tyerman writes, "The Templars occupy a prominent place in the pantheon of Alternative History of the 'what they have tried to conceal from us' genre, championed by obsessive swivel-eyed anoraks and conspiracy theorists allied to cool money sharks bent on the commercial exploitation of public credulity."

This passage neatly sums up the book's attitude to both the medieval and modern worlds. In Tyerman's view, both are made up of cynical deceivers and guileless fools. Referring to the 2001 book *Warriors of God*, a popular and very poor history of the Crusades by James Reston, Jr., Tyerman sneers, "A recent best-selling book on Saladin and Richard I, apparently the bed-time reading of American presidents, in its psychobabble, inaccuracy, and dramatization reads like a screenplay."

Although Tyerman provides a good explanation of the development of the Christian concept of just war and holy war, he clearly sees that development as a warping of a pacifistic faith. He twice refers to Christian holy war as an "oxymoron." The "so-called Church Fathers" helped to bring this distortion about, thus preparing the way for someone like Pope Urban II. Like Asbridge, Tyerman sees only cynical secular motives in Urban's call for the First Crusade. The pope "seized on the opportunity to promote papal authority in temporal affairs. From its inception, crusading represented a practical expression of papal ideology, leadership, and power."

Did the Muslim threat have anything to do with the Crusades? Not at all: "Crusading exemplifies the exploitation of the fear of what sociologists call 'the other,' alien peoples or concepts ranged against which social groups can find or be given cohesion: Communism and Capitalism; Democracy and Fascism; Christians and non-Christians; Whites and Non-Whites;

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Them and Us." Thus, in Tyerman's view, the Crusades were the result of a papal desire to build worldly power through fear-mongering.

Given the frequency with which Tyerman refers to medieval anti-Jewish pogroms, one might well conclude that the purpose of the Crusades was to annihilate Jews. Indeed, he uses these massacres as evidence of the brutal nature of the Crusades and the success of the Church in whipping up hatred for "the other." Nowhere does he mention that these attacks on Jews were isolated incidents in direct violation of Church law and condemned by churchmen and secular leaders alike. Anti-Jewish attacks were seen as a perversion of crusading, and people like St. Bernard of Clairvaux worked hard to keep them from happening at all.

Tyerman's *Fighting for Christendom* is a difficult book to read. Aside from its general tone of condescending superiority, there is also an over-reliance on the language of easy indignation: the frequent use of such words as "shocking," "appalling," "brutally," "butchery," "vicious," "barbarism," and "atrocities" undermines the sobriety of the author's arguments. Nevertheless, parts of the book are genuinely praiseworthy. Tyerman offers one of the best short explanations of Islamic jihad and its relationship to Crusade, and his description of the place of Crusade within Christian society gives an excellent overview of the current scholarly consensus. He points out that the Crusades were not an economic boon for Europe and that Italians, far from being traitors of the crusading ideal, were among its most enthusiastic devotees.

His account of the scholarly controversy regarding the colonial nature of the Latin East is also quite good, as is his overall description of that unique society. He rightly points out that while a distorted memory of the Crusades may engender animosities in the Middle East and breast-beating in the West, those memories have little to do with the facts. In his characteristic tone he writes that "the re-entry of the Crusades into the politics of the Near East is baleful and intellectually bogus." As a counterpoise to Edward Said, Tyerman refers to a troubling "Occidentalism" in the Middle East that "assumes an inherent conflict of power and victimization that elevates a wholly unhistorical link between modern colonialism and medieval crusading." He wisely concludes, "The Crusades can only be understood on their own terms, in their own time." It is a conclusion that both Phillips and Asbridge would surely endorse.

As historians of the Crusades begin to present their research to the general reader, the common caricature of these events is finally beginning to dissolve. Unlike most older popular histories on the subject, these new books are fastidious about the facts, and they are less inclined to patronize the past or flatter the modern reader's prejudices. While their arguments about what motivated the Crusades are sometimes questionable, they are never anachronistic—and that alone constitutes an important improvement. FT

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The New Fusionism

Joseph Bottum

Social conservatives, fiscal conservatives, libertarians, agrarians, communitarians, foreign-policy hawks—who can figure them out? Neocons and theocons and paleocons, to say nothing of soccer-mom Republicans, country-club Republicans, and just plain, garden-variety Republicans: If you read much political commentary, it must seem as though there are more ways to sort conservatives in America than there are actual conservatives to be sorted.

And what about the issues for which these different conservatives care? Abortion, tax cuts, school vouchers, judicial overreach, the government's bloated budget, bioethics, homosexual marriage, the creation of democracies in the Middle East, federalism, immigration, the restoration of religion in the public square—on and on. They bear no more than the vaguest family resemblance: second or third cousins, shirt-tail kin at best.

Back during the Cold War, conservatives could all be counted upon at least to share an opposition to communism, while various writers—from Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises to Russell Kirk and Michael Oakeshott—sought something resembling a unifying theory through the rich pages of Adam Smith's economics and the deep prose of Edmund Burke's traditionalism.

What now remains? Hardly a single concern is common to everyone labeled a conservative, and the chance of finding a meaningful pattern in the Right's political muddle appears hopelessly remote. It's true that nearly every conservative ended up voting for George Bush for president in 2004. Even the paleoconservatives opposed to intervention in Iraq finally seemed to admit, for the most part, that the alternative of an openly liberal administration under John Kerry was unendurable. But only in the fevered imaginings of the far Left—or in the speeches of Democratic party activists looking to score partisan jabs—does all this really cohere. Conservatism in America is neither a well-defined political party nor a well-formed political theory. It's a crack-up waiting to happen.

Except perhaps for this curious fact: Those who believe the murderousness of abortion to be the fundamental moral issue of our times and those who see the forceful defeat of global, anti-Western Islamicism as the most pressing political concern we face—the pro-life social conservatives and the foreign-policy neoconservatives, in other words—seem to be increasingly voting together, meeting together, and thinking together. If you want to advance the pro-life cause, you will quickly find yourself seated beside those who support an activist, interventionist, and moralist foreign policy for the United States. And, conversely, if you are serious about the war on terror, you will soon discover that you are mingling with those fighting against abortion.

To say the American political scene need not have developed this way is more than an understatement. At any of the levels on which political analysis normally operates, the connection between abortion and terror seems weak, at best—and possibly a perversion that threatens the causes of both partners. How can opponents of abortion dare to allow a setback in the Middle East to ruin the chances of electing pro-life officials? Why would foreign-policy activists risk the loss of political support that a major turn against their social-conservative allies might entail?

Indeed, these movements appear quite easy to break apart. No one could accuse the Catholic Church, for instance, of being soft on the life issues, but the Vatican

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was strongly opposed to the United States' intervention in Iraq—to the point of hosting a state visit in Rome and Assisi by Saddam Hussein's vicious deputy, Tariq Aziz, in February 2003. Much of the Roman curia seems to have fallen into a functional pacifism that threatens a damaging loss of the traditional Catholic theory of just war. But, even with such confusions set aside, this much is obviously true: Every war, just or not, involves killing. Though the doctrine of what used to be called the "seamless garment of life" has worn threadbare over the years, there is surely a coherent position that insists on opposition to both the culture of death and American intervention in Iraq.

A distaste for abortion coupled with rejection of the current U.S. foreign policy defines many of the people labeled "paleoconservatives," from Patrick Buchanan on down. The right-wing columnist Robert Novak hailed the effort to save Terri Schiavo from death by dehydration—even while he raged against the cost of the invasion of Iraq. A similar joining can be found among a few liberals as well: the political commentators E.J. Dionne and Mark Shields, for instance, or Michigan's Bart Stupak and the handful of other anti-war Democrats in Congress who reject *Roe v. Wade*.

Meanwhile, you can find a number of others who simply invert these positions: both applauding the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and upholding legalized abortion. The pro-war Democrats in Congress mostly belong to this group, from Hillary Clinton to Joseph Lieberman, whatever verbal gestures they made about abortion in the aftermath of their party's defeat in the 2004 election.

Such Republican stalwarts as Rudy Giuliani, George Pataki, and Arnold Schwarzenegger promote similar views. The *New York Times*' columnist David Brooks belongs to the pro-interventionist party while declaring himself at least a mild supporter of legalized abortion (although in a recent column he strongly denounced *Roe v. Wade*). The actor Ron Silver, who spoke at the Republican National Convention last summer, and Roger L. Simon, a popular mystery writer turned popular blogger, are examples of liberals who, though reoriented on foreign policy by the attacks of September 11, seem nonetheless to remain solidly pro-choice. And then there are the pro-intervention libertarians, from the *Instapundit* blogger Glenn Reynolds on, who have only the smallest interest in the life issues, and that mostly in opposition to the pro-life side.

Of course, for purely political purposes, the anti-abortion movement and the foreign-policy activists were obviously correct to join forces—given their shared desire to help reelect President Bush and increase the Republicans' hold on Congress. Polls this spring showed some weakness in popular support for the president's administration, but, as the political analyst Michael Barone observed in response, "the hardest numbers in politics are election results." The pro-life and pro-Iraq Republicans won handily in 2004—and along the way, they laid the groundwork for future gains, with eleven Democratic senators facing reelection in states carried overwhelmingly by Bush and only three Republicans in states taken solidly by Kerry. As nearly every commentator has observed, abortion and the war on terror are now linked at some of the most practical levels of partisan political calculation.

This fact is usually noted by way of indicting the conservative coalition: The presidential election featured two-faced foreign-policy activists using religious voters—"poor, undereducated, and easily led," in the famous formulation of the *Washington Post*—to advance their empire-building agenda. Or maybe it featured hypocritical religious leaders cynically trading support for the Iraq war in return for help confirming anti-*Roe* judges. Regardless, the joint effort was a purely political arrangement.

Why this is supposed to be an indictment remains something of a mystery. Both these kinds of conservatives were represented in the initial appointments of the Bush administration, well before the attacks of September 11—and they remain represented today, when the nation is still responding to those attacks and the death of Terri Schiavo, together with the chance of naming new anti-*Roe* members of the Supreme Court, has rallied the pro-life movement. American political campaigns, narrowed to an effective choice between Republicans and Democrats, always forge unlikely alliances. Be angry at democracy, if such things anger you. No party is ever the complete choice of all its voters, and no election is ever without a little mixing of issues.

In any event, there's a good argument that the Democrats themselves forced together the Republicans' coalition of voters troubled by abortion and voters worried about international terrorism. Long before the presidential election—among the anti-war protesters at A.N.S.W.E.R marches, for instance, or the poets who loudly spurned Mrs. Bush's invitation to a White House literary tea at the beginning of 2003—you could see building the impulse to translate the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq from foreign-policy issues to culture-wars issues.

By the early days of the 2004 campaign season, the translation was complete. Leftist groups such as *MoveOn.org* took quick advantage of the Democrats' system of primaries, which exaggerates the power of

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the party's most radical elements, to boom the candidacies of Howard Dean and Wesley Clark—putting enormous pressure on the other Democratic hopefuls. Even without any realistic chance to gain his party's nomination, Dennis Kucinich caved in by renouncing his previously staunch anti-abortion position, while the more plausible Richard Gephardt joined up by downplaying his mild support for intervention in Iraq. And John Kerry tried—well, it's hard to say quite what John Kerry tried to do. Whatever it was, it left him in an awkward position when the general election rolled around.

Why should we be surprised that all this activity early in the election cycle was effective, not only in shaping the Democratic candidates at whom it was aimed, but in shaping the general public as well? By the end of the primaries, the divisions about Iraq among ordinary voters matched to a startling degree the divisions over abortion. As Midge Decter once quipped, the time eventually comes when you have to join the side you're on. If the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime must be treated as a battle in the culture wars, then it is a battle whose opponents were defined long before.

But the argument from happenstance—from the flukes of electoral politics—fails to express everything that needs to be said about the recent joining of many of those opposed to abortion and the bulk of those who desire an active, moralist foreign policy. If only as a courtesy to serious figures from the papal biographer George Weigel to the *Weekly Standard* editor William Kristol, we need to consider the possibility that pure political calculation isn't the only cause for the recent fusion of social conservatives and neoconservatives.

Down somewhere in the deepest understanding of what America is for—somewhere in the profound awareness of what it will take to reverse the nation's long drift into social defeatism—there are reasons that one might link the rejection of abortion and the demand for an active and moral foreign policy. Things could have fallen into different patterns; our current liberal-conservative divisions are not the only imaginable ways to cut the political cake. But neither are they merely accidental.

The opponents of abortion and euthanasia insist there are truths about human life and dignity that must not be compromised in domestic politics. The opponents of Islamofascism and rule by terror insist there are truths about human life and dignity that must not be compromised in international politics. Why shouldn't they grow toward each other? The desire to find intellectual and moral seriousness in one realm can breed the desire to find intellectual and moral seriousness in another.

There may be several ways to convince Americans to reject *Roe v. Wade*—but one of them is by remembering that the nation's founding ideals are *true* and worth defending against the enemies of freedom around the world. There may be several ways to reawaken a sense of national purpose—but one of them is by summoning the will to undo our judicially ordered abortion regime. In the new fusionism, social conservatives and neoconservatives are not in any immediate contradiction. The wish to restore American patriotism, the struggle against abortion, annoyance at the dated elitism of an overweening judiciary, and the war in Iraq—these all seem to have become curiously interdependent issues.

One of the least edifying spectacles in American conservatism over the years has been the apparent determination, among later converts, to disparage earlier converts. For decades, the soft Left in America has had a bad conscience about its softness: The radicals always seemed to make the moderates feel a little guilty. On the Right, too, there have been bad consciences—but, oddly, these also have to do with Leftness. It seems necessary to nearly everyone on the Right to find a more Rightist group *against* which to set themselves. If "No Enemies on the Left" is more or less the motto of liberals in America, "Only Enemies to the Right" seems to be the motto of conservatives.

A few figures have tried to hold together the rag-tag collection of refugees. Ronald Reagan, with his "big-tent" Republican party, for instance. And Frank Meyer, who used the word "fusionism" to speak of the libertarian and traditionalist writers he helped work together while he was an editor at *National Review* in the 1950s and 1960s. And Robert Bartley, who opened to a range of conservatives the op-ed pages of the *Wall Street Journal* he edited through the 1990s.

But mostly, when American politicians and pundits have a conservative impulse, they feel compelled to begin by distinguishing themselves from the rest of conservatism. There was, for instance, a period in the 1980s in which nearly every article in the ostensibly liberal *New Republic* seemed to open with something like: "I'm not one of those horrible conservatives, and I'd never vote for a Republican, but, gosh, there actually seems to be some merit to the idea of welfare reform"—or a strengthened military, or a mistrust of the United Nations, or any of a dozen other conservative topics.

Thus, the neoconservatives explain what is despicable about libertarians, and the libertarians denounce

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the social conservatives—and round it goes. In a widely noticed 2003 article in *National Review*, David Frum declared that the isolationist paleoconservatives "have turned their backs on their country. Now we turn our backs on them." In a later essay in the *Public Interest*, Adam Wolfson took much the same line, albeit more gently, in rejecting the conservative credentials of the paleoconservatives.

Some of this is clearly necessary. The handful of anti-Semites and neoconfederates on the fringes of the Right deserves dismissal, and the differences between the paleoconservative followers of Pat Buchanan and the neoconservative analysts at the Project for the New American Century cut to the heart of American policy. But even here you can see the lineaments of the new fusionism. The pro-life movement won't read out of conservatism any foreign-policy activists, unless they repeatedly trumpet their support for abortion. And the neoconservatives won't banish any social conservatives, unless they make a loud stink about their opposition to intervention in the Middle East.

One could perhaps make the same point by negative example: The widely cited homosexual activist and blog writer Andrew Sullivan started by being a strong supporter of a forceful American foreign policy after the attacks of September 11. By the 2004 presidential election, however, he had flipped into utter rejection of President Bush's policies. And though he tried at times to relate his conversion to worries about fiscal matters, it was finally his inability to join any coalition with social conservatives that seems to have forced him into an anti-Iraq stance. It even buried what he once insisted was his pro-life stance, a topic he now seldom discusses.

But mostly one can see the new fusionism in its results. "Neoconservative" is a word whose meaning has undergone some changes over the years. It began life in the 1970s when the socialist Michael Harrington coined it to describe certain writers and public figures who found themselves moving from Left to Right on a variety of issues—often starting with the out-of-control crime rates of the time: "liberals mugged by reality," in Irving Kristol's well-known phrase.

By the late 1990s, however, the word "neoconservative" had mostly disappeared, except to describe a historical moment twenty years before when—as *National Review*'s Jonah Goldberg jokingly described it—"a bunch of citified Jews and intellectual Catholics . . . traded one ideology for another." And then, suddenly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, the word was back in the vocabulary of the nation's chattering classes, this time used to describe people (particularly anyone with the least connection to students of the University of Chicago political philosopher Leo Strauss) who pushed for the toppling of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

But taking the word in both the old sense and the new, we should note at least one visible change: The people called neoconservative are much more opposed to abortion than they were even ten years ago. The shift has occurred across the spectrum. The ones who started out solidly pro-choice are now uneasy, the ones who started out uneasy are now more uneasy, and the ones who started out quietly anti-abortion are now strong pro-lifers.

Maybe it was all the time spent with Catholics, or maybe it was the rise of the worries about biotechnology that Leon Kass and others have brought to light, but—whatever group we use the word to encompass—the neoconservatives have generally grown in their alliance with the social conservatives to accept a central place for the pro-life position in any theory of conservatism.

Meanwhile, the social conservatives have grown up, too. When the Evangelicals burst on the political scene in the 1970s, they hardly knew what the words "foreign policy" meant. But now "one cannot understand international relations without them," as Allen Hertzke observed in *Freeing God's Children*, his 2004 report on American religious impact around the world. From the Virginia congressman Frank Wolfe to the Kansas senator Sam Brownback, the religious conservatives in Washington have led the fight against international sex trafficking and a host of other human-rights abuses.

They achieved real results in southern Sudan, and they are straining to find similar traction in the Darfur region of western Sudan. Far beyond their Democratic counterparts, they have demonstrated seriousness about human rights in North Korea and China. "Members of the Christian right, exemplified by Mr. Brownback," the left-leaning columnist Nicholas Kristof reluctantly admitted in the *New York Times* this Christmas, "are the new internationalists, increasingly engaged in humanitarian causes abroad."

And then there's Israel. "No one outside the Jewish community has been more supportive of Israel than U.S. evangelical Christians," the *Jerusalem Post* bluntly noted in 2002—but the phenomenon has been building for years. Perhaps it began with believers' interest in apocalyptic biblical prophecy about the Holy Land and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. But to imagine it stops there is to ignore the Religious Right's record in recent years on human rights and support for democratic reforms. The success of Israel—the

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Middle East's only full democracy before the intervention of the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq—is seen by social conservatives as a model that deserves copying.

"The remoralization of America at home ultimately requires the remoralization of American foreign policy, for both follow from Americans' belief that the principles of the Declaration of Independence are not merely the choices of a particular culture but are universal, enduring, 'self-evident' truths," William Kristol and Robert Kagan wrote in the journal *Foreign Affairs* back in 1996. "That has been, after all, the main point of the conservatives' war against a relativistic multiculturalism. For conservatives to preach the importance of upholding the core elements of the Western tradition at home, but to profess indifference to the fate of American principles abroad, is an inconsistency that cannot help but gnaw at the heart of conservatism."

It was a line for which Kristol and Kagan have been occasionally pilloried in the years since, but there is a practical truth here about the way moral movements in a culture actually grow and colonize adjacent fields and draw in supporters. One could name various American experiences, but the clearest example may be the Wesleyan remoralization of English domestic life, and its well-documented relation to the British campaign against international slavery, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

More, at the level of political theory, there's a reasonable connection between what we do at home and what we do abroad—or, at least, between the attitudes that cause us to enact certain domestic agendas and the attitudes that drive our foreign policy. A nation that cannot summon the political will to ban even one particularly gruesome form of abortion is unlikely to persevere in the grueling work of building international democracy simply because it seems the moral thing to do. And a nation that cannot bring itself to believe its founding ideals are true for others will probably prove unable to hold those ideals for itself.

The abolition of abortion and the active advance of democracy have more in common, I believe, than is usually thought. But even if they are utterly separate philosophically, this much is true: They both require reversing the failure of nerve that has lingered in America since at least the 1970s, and success in one may well feed success in the other.

The goal in either case is to restore confidence in—well, what, exactly? Not our own infallible rightness, surely. But neither can we live any longer with the notion of our own infallible wrongness. We need to restore belief in the *possibility* of being right. There's a reason the leftist Christian magazine *Sojourners* started life in the 1970s as something called the *Post-American*. Many religious activists in those days seemed to have reached a point where they couldn't tell an admirable patriotism from the murderous ideologies of nationalism—and, besides, if you squinted hard enough, social defeatism looked like a secular version of the Christian doctrine of Original Sin. The result was hardly what they hoped for: a cynical policy of *Realpolitik* abroad and a culture of death at home.

In the new fusionism of the pro-life social conservatives and the foreign-policy neoconservatives, a number of traditional issues seem, if not to have disappeared, then at least to have gotten muted along the way. Where exactly is tax reform and social security and the balanced budget in all this? Where is much concern for economics, which once defined the root of American conservatism?

Perhaps they are missing because, however important, they do not bear hard on the immediate question of social defeatism—on the deep changes that might reawaken and remoralize the nation. The one thing both the social conservatives and the neoconservatives know is that this project comes first.

The angry isolationist paleoconservatives are probably right—this isn't conservatism, in several older senses of the word. But so what? Call it the new moralism, if you like. Call it a masked liberalism or a kind of radicalism that has bizarrely seized the American scene. Mutter darkly, if you want, about the shotgun marriage of ex-socialists and modern puritans, the cynical political joining of imperial adventurers with reactionary Catholics and backwoods Evangelicals. These facts still remain: The sense of national purpose regained by forceful response to the attacks of September 11 could help summon the will to halt the slaughter of a million unborn children a year. And the energy of the pro-life fight—the fundamental moral cause of our time—may revitalize belief in the great American experiment. FT

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Books in Review

Offer Declined

The Future of Religion
By Richard Rorty and Gianni Vattimo
Columbia University Press
112 pp. $24.50.

Reviewed by Paul J. Griffiths

The Future of Religion is the perfect primer in post-metaphysical historicism: it's short, it's clear, it's repetitive, and it leaves no doubt at all as to its central purpose and point. Its claim is that the proper future of religion in general and Christianity in particular is to produce men like Richard Rorty and Gianni Vattimo and to nurture the culture in which they flourish. In so far as Christianity can manage this, it will survive; insofar as it cannot, it will wither.

Rorty and Vattimo are men quite sure of their place in the vanguard of history, and they're eager to tell you their story so that you, too, may become an acolyte, formed in their image by the gentle pressure of their civilizing thought. Rorty, the apostle of irony, endorses without irony the idea that there really is a European *mission civilisatrice*—and that he knows the content of the mission. Neither he nor Vattimo mentions manifest destiny or the white man's burden, but these ideas lurk disturbingly close to the surface of their urbanely arrogant prose. Theirs is the burden of the civilizing mission, theirs the weary destiny of the avant-garde, bound always to explain to the laggards, the revisionists, and the simply stupid what the real story is.

So what is the real story? It's simple enough, and although the American Rorty and the Italian Vattimo have been formed by different philosophical and religious traditions (pragmatism and red-diaper communism for Rorty, hermeneutics and cradle Catholicism for Vattimo), they agree on most of its elements. The first element in the story is that metaphysical thought—also called "onto-theology," "realism," "objectivism," and so on—has been decisively abandoned by the West. The abandonment of metaphysics, as Vattimo puts it, is the form of thought that corresponds to our epoch. Next comes the claim that this now-abandoned metaphysical thought is incompatible with democracy and the exercise of civic responsibility and virtue. And finally there's the claim that religion, though slow to achieve this, is moving inexorably in the same post-metaphysical direction: away from being a contributor to the ordering of the public sphere, and toward being a private comfort that may foster civic virtue.

Paul J. Griffiths *is Schmitt Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His latest book is* Lying: An Augustinian Theology of Duplicity *(Brazos).*

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This much Rorty and Vattimo hold in common. They agree, too, in being historicists. For them, any claim is necessarily an "interested response to a particular historical situation," in Vattimo's words—or, as Rorty puts it (ventriloquizing Hegel), what we do when we do philosophy is to hold our time in thought. The authors are, of course, clever enough to see that these historicist claims too must be historicized. They too are interventions to be understood indexically and historically, not as though they encapsulated eternal truths about the way things must necessarily be. They are simply the kinds of things we must say now if we are to speak in a way that corresponds to our epoch.

RORTY AND VATTIMO differ about what caused Christianity to begin to overcome its metaphysical captivity and grow into the handmaiden of democracy. In Rorty's view, it was a slow and painful accommodation to the ideas of the Enlightenment, which found their emblematic expression in the France of the late eighteenth century. In Vattimo's view it was something intrinsic and proper to Christianity: God's self-emptying incarnation began a process that gradually emptied Christianity of metaphysical lusts, with the result that—at least for right-thinking quasi-Catholics like himself—Christianity can now be understood exhaustively as a "call to practice" without metaphysical assumptions or implications, a call that can be summarized with the word "love" and interpreted as entirely concordant with postmodern nihilism. This, he says, is "the actual truth of Christianity."

One thing it isn't, of course, is the Catholicism of the Church, and Rorty and Vattimo return to agreement in excoriating that institution. They insist that democracy and civic virtue require anticlericalism, and they are not embarrassed to approach endorsement of hatred for priests and their doings, as well as for the magisterial teaching of the Church.

All this is, at one level, a quaintly old-fashioned form of Whig history. History is progress toward a goal: We move up from the darkly metaphysical slime of the oppressive Church and its corrupt priests toward the high ground and clear light of democracy, led by the fearless professoriate. Morals, on such a view of history, can easily be drawn from historical narratives. Rorty is explicit about this, and it goes nicely

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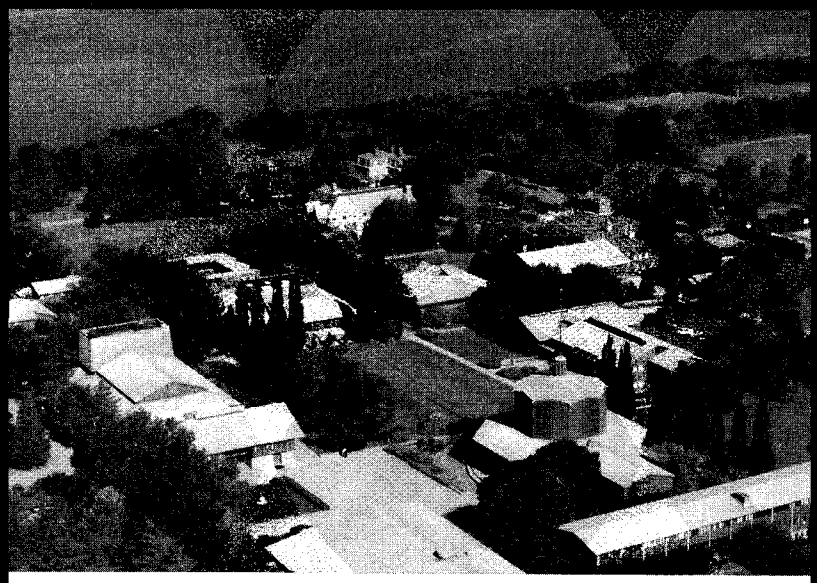

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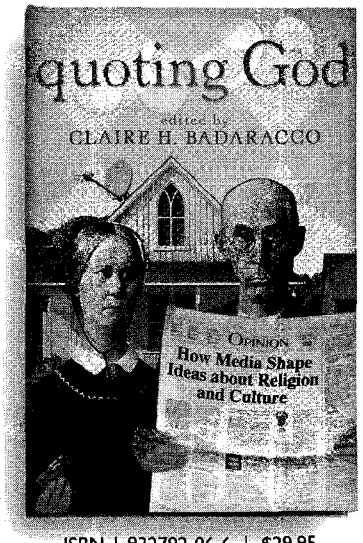
with the idea that Europeans have a *mission civilisatrice*. The most important moral to be drawn from our history as told by Rorty and Vattimo is that metaphysical ways of thinking and talking, wedded as they are to the vocabulary of truth and realism, are dangerous and better refused. This Whiggish approach to history is itself an old story. Readers of Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* or David Hume's *Natural History of Religion* will feel themselves at once in familiar territory. Gibbon and Hume saw themselves as history's vanguard, civilizing the savages by telling the right story, and so do Rorty and Vattimo.

BUT THE BLAND *vieux jeu* flavor of this Whig story is made piquant by the theoretical gloss Rorty and Vattimo provide—a gloss certainly not found in Gibbon or Hume. The first element in this theoretical gloss is the idea of a simple refusal. A whole vocabulary—that of truth, reality, objectivity, universality—is identified and refused. It is not argued against, not shown to be incoherent, not opposed by its mirror image, but simply refused. In rejecting realism, Rorty and Vattimo do not espouse or argue for anti-realism; and in rejecting metaphysics they don't argue (or even suggest, at least when they're being careful) that metaphysics is impossible. They are "post-metaphysical" rather than "anti-metaphysical": they aren't against metaphysics; they're simply *after* it, subsequent to it. They've left it behind. Refusal is not denial. It is, instead, the abandonment of one lexicon and the deployment of another. Someone who turns from philosophy to jazz improvisation has not refuted or rebutted philosophy, but merely refused or abandoned it. To refute or rebut would still be to practice philosophy, and this Rorty and Vattimo do not wish to do.

The refusal is followed at once by a narration. This is post-metaphysical historicism, after all, and what historicists do is narrate. Indeed, a consistent historicist can do *only* this, and so Rorty and Vattimo intervene in philosophy by refusing its vocabulary and telling a story about why that vocabulary was once usable and now isn't. This story may mention, but cannot use, the terms of the refused lexicon, for if those terms were to be used the refusal would be incomplete: the refused vocabulary would still be in



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play. By providing a narrative frame for the emergence and decay of philosophy's lexicon, Rorty and Vattimo intend to illustrate the contingency of that lexicon and the possibility of talking in other ways—for example, in the way that historicists talk.

The theoretical gloss is completed, burnished to a high shine, by a commentary on the refusal and the narration. A good deal of what's in this book consists in such commentary. Rorty and Vattimo repeatedly tell us that their refusals and narrations do not imply that the refused vocabulary is being argued against. No, it's just that they prefer a different way of talking. They understand that their narrative intervention is itself utterly contingent, itself to be understood exhaustively as a creature of a particular time, place, and set of interests. They think and hope their intervention may prompt others to take up this way of talking, to embroider upon and extend its tropes, to apply its lexicon in new and imaginative ways. But if it doesn't, it doesn't. There are no argumentative or persuasive resources available to them other than the seductively attractive narrative, and it is part of the seductiveness of their position to be clear in acknowledging this.

Post-metaphysical historicists win, when they do, not by outarguing their opponents, but by out-narrating them, by telling a story with sufficient verve and inventiveness that others also want to tell versions of it, and in doing so to abandon their older stories—in this case, the stories about truth and realism. Bebop, in the hands of geniuses like Charlie Parker, effectively displaced Swing and the big-band sound in the 1950s, and the way in which it did this is exactly analogous to the way in which a consistent post-metaphysical historicism tries to displace its opponents.

A carefully consistent post-metaphysical historicism of this sort is not easy to refute, since it does not use a vocabulary in which refutation is even a recognizable item. Arguments against this kind of theory have no more purchase than arguments against bebop. They amount to saying, "Just stop that"—or, more politely, "Won't you listen to me?" The post-metaphysical historicist is likely to respond, like Bartleby the Scrivener, "I would prefer not to." Refutation and coercive argument is not what interests

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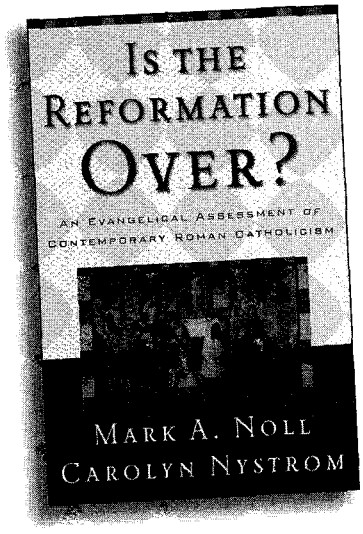

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Thomists, phenomenologists, and analytic philosophers emerge from encounters like this with an obscure sense of frustration. Something has not gone right. Some point has been missed. Rorty and Vattimo, by contrast, emerge serene. Things are easier for them: The refusal and the narration are easy gestures, and it takes only a modicum of literary flair and historical confidence to peg the acolyte of truth and demonstrative argument as a creature from another age.

HOW, THEN, to respond? One perfectly proper response is to make one's own refusal. If something is offered, without argument, as an object of seductive charm, the offer can be refused without embarrassment or justification. There are people who don't like Charlie Parker's playing, and unless they're uncommonly foolish, they don't spend a lot of time arguing about it. They just listen to Mozart instead. The enterprise of post-metaphysical historicism requires for its own success that people listen, adopt, and imitate. Not doing this, therefore, serves as a refusal Rorty and Vattimo can recognize.

But there is another kind of response that may sometimes be useful. It, too, is an intervention rather than an argument. Rorty and Vattimo can themselves be pegged, and it's easy enough for Christians to do this with our own technical lexicon. We can explain to ourselves what kind of performance Rorty and Vattimo offer. We can diagnose their performance as a bad case of *libido dominandi*, in which their own egos have been written so large that they must depict history as a story of progress culminating in their own genius. We can counterpose to this unrestricted *superbia* the Christian virtue of humility. And we can narrate the emergence of post-metaphysical historicism as the last, dying gasp of a story the West has told itself about its own supremacy. This counter-narration will not persuade Rorty and Vattimo of anything. But it will convict them, and that's enough.

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By ROSALIND BARNETT and CARYL RIVERS
Basic. 289 pp. $25.

Reviewed by Sara Butler

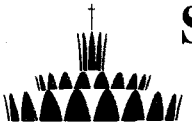
WHEN STEVEN RHOADS published *Taking Sex Differences Seriously* last fall, he received considerable praise from the conservative press for his common-sense argument that gender differences are innate, since masculinity and femininity are dictated by nature. But then, as if to prove that every move on one side is matched by a countermove on the other, Rosalind Barnett and Caryl Rivers quickly published *Same Difference: How Gender Myths Are Hurting Our Relationships, Our Children, and Our Jobs*—a book, widely praised by the liberal press, which asserted a different piece of common sense: "When we look around, we see clearly that all men are not alike and all women are not alike." Reading both these volumes together, one is pushed to the inevitable question: Can't we have a relation of men and women that understands both these truths?

Apparently not. *In Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, Rhoads marshals evidence from across disciplines to argue that men and women naturally behave quite differently in three different areas: sex, nurturing, and aggression. Men are more competitive, more promiscuous, and less nurturing than women—since their hormones, brains, and evolutionary histories are fundamentally different. He argues that it is "misogynist" to deny these differences in the name of women's equality and to shape public policy that ignores them. The sexual revolution and feminist movement, which were expected to liberate women at last, in fact created a society in which men can get what they want from women—sex—without responsibility or commitment, while women are increasingly frustrated in their desires for home and children. After all the changes for women in the second half of the twentieth century, the results are in, and women have gotten a raw deal.

Unfortunately, Rhoads' book is ultimately limited by his choice of language, specifically the choice between "sex" and "gender." "The term gender difference," Rhoads warns, "reflects the assumption that any distinctions between the sexes' traits arise from society's rigid gender roles, which channel people's thoughts and actions in stereotypical directions." In fact, "gender" is an extremely useful word when used not instead of "sex" but along side it. "Sex" refers to one's biological status as male or female. "Gender" is founded on, and made unavoidable by, sex differences, but it refers to the cultural ways in which that biological status is expressed, the different ideals different societies hold up for men and for women. Gender is the social meaning given to the biological fact of sex difference.

Rhoads' assertion that there is no gender, only sex, points to the problem he has discerning what we *ought* to be like. "I certainly have no quarrel with the view that we should not encourage everything we may be inclined by nature to do," he writes, but he does not provide us with a principled way to distinguish sex

SARA BUTLER *is a research associate at the Institute for American Values.*



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differences that should be followed from sex differences that should be resisted. On the one hand, if women deny their nature, it "can bring heartbreaking torment." On the other hand, civilization requires that men deny their "tendencies toward violence and predatory sex." Happy women conform to their nature, to femininity; happy men fight their nature, fight masculinity.

ONE DOESN'T have to be a believer in feminist ideology to be a little skeptical of a theory that automatically gives men a certain degree of freedom from nature that women do not have. According to this line of thought, sexual chastity does not come naturally to men, so we shouldn't be all that surprised when they fail. Women, however, are supposed to have nature on their side; if they still insist on being sexually active, even promiscuous, they must be really awful—much more depraved then their male counterparts who behave the same way.

While lust presents temptations to both men and women, Rhoads makes *men's* lust fundamental. "When the beauty is not fully clothed, men may have a harder time keeping actions from following thought." Of course, women can do something about this—dress modestly. But what about men's responsibility to fight their nature as if civilization depended on it? Rhoads says not a word about avoiding pornography and strip clubs or cultivating habits of respect for women. If "masculinity" is just a word for how men behave naturally, then the exhortation to "be a man" loses all its power; it doesn't even make sense. And when he discovers that some women do not fit his category of natural femininity, he is forced to come up with a "natural" explanation: these women are "high-testosterone women," not normal women at all.

Still, Rhoads is right about at least one thing: Gender is persistent. This is something the authors of *Same Difference* fail to grasp. Rosalind Barnett and Caryl Rivers are disturbed by what they see as the reemergence of a new set of "gender myths." In relationships, work, and parenting, they argue, the attribution of certain characteristics to specific genders has hurt men and, especially, women by hiding power structures underneath supposedly innate gender differences. These myths keep men and women in confining categories, denying them the flexibility they need and burdening them with guilt. These myths are "not helping the millions of men and women managing multiple roles at home and in the workforce."

BARNETT AND RIVERS often seem less concerned about the truth of their argument than about its results (they scold fellow feminists Deborah Tannen and Carol Gilligan for "delivering a message that women are very different from men, which could easily be twisted to diminish women's opportunities"). But their book cannot be dismissed entirely as agenda-driven. They remind us that "women and men shift their behavior all the time." Men do nurture in some circumstances, just as women can be quite aggressive.

The difference, according to Barnett and Rivers, is power. For example, in the chapter that addresses gender myths in communication, they suggest that the "female" speech style, indicating "involvement, connection, and participation," is really the style used by all who feel less powerful than the person to whom they are speaking, while the "male" speech style, indicating "independence and position in a hierarchy," is used by anyone who feels in control of a conversation.

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Barnett and Rivers are right to call our attention to instances where we confuse biology and culture, and there is much in *Same Difference* to sharpen understandings of gender—as, for example, their warning that we create suspicion rather than trust "by teaching men to view women as being interested only in men's paychecks and women to believe that men are biologically programmed to have sex and run off."

But by using this equation of gender and power as their only interpretative framework, they wind up denying the existence of sex in the same way that Rhoads denies the existence of gender. They claim their book "acknowledges the existence of gender differences"—but apparently gender differences are so unimportant that one paragraph is sufficient exploration of them. The disclaimer is meant mainly to preempt the accusation that Barnett and Rivers are saying men and women are exactly the same; apparently they are afraid that any further discussion of difference would contribute to the backlash against women.

WHAT ULTIMATELY makes *Same Difference* so unsatisfying is the authors' refusal to question their own premises. Rivers and Barnett carefully draw the boundaries of what are acceptable conclusions at the outset of their argument. "Nowadays most women, including mothers of young children, are part of the paid labor force from their twenties until retirement," they write. "This revolution in women's lives, and in the life of the family, is taken for granted today." It's clear that this revolution will also be taken for granted throughout their book. Their first concern is women's status in the workplace; almost every issue they discuss, from parenting to communication to aggression, is seen from the perspective of working women. They go to great lengths to reassure working mothers, and they can be pretty harsh on women who still feel the pull of home: "Perhaps for mothers, the idea of being the primary nurturer is akin to a security blanket, something to hang onto in a time of great change. . . . Maybe 'mommy' should face the fact that she won't always be number one in her child's eyes."

It seems there's no problem a woman can't solve by getting a job; Barnett and Rivers ask us to "imagine the different ending *Death of a Salesman* might have had if Willy Loman's wife had held a good job." Similarly, no social institution is sacred when it comes to achieving gender equality in the workplace; anything and everything may be

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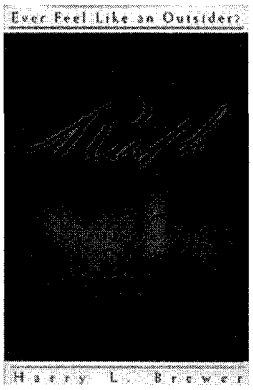

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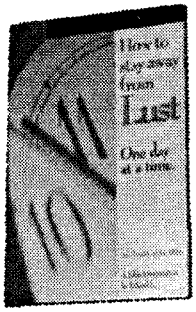

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Ultimately, both *Taking Sex Differences Seriously* and *Same Difference* suffer from a kind of literal-mindedness. Rhoads treats sex as a law of nature, one that he embraces, while Rivers and Barnett argue against gender as an arbitrary law to be delegitimized. Rhoads looks back nostalgically to a past when men were men and women were women, while Rivers and Barnett look back apprehensively to a past when men were patriarchs and women were oppressed. Their reliance on evolutionary psychology and primatology as ways of getting at what is real and supposedly constant about men and women lead them to coarse simplification: There was gender "then" and gender "now," and we have only to determine, with surveys and studies, which version is most true. After reading both these books, I still don't know whether the scientific evidence says that women are naturally more nurturing than men, or that men are naturally more aggressive than women.

But if we look at gender not just as nature's law but also as social meaning, then the false dichotomy dissolves: gender becomes both inescapable and beautifully flexible. While Rivers and Barnett warn that "yesterday's formulas—no matter how invitingly packaged—are unreliable road maps to a future filled with change and uncertainty," a turn to history and the humanities may actually be exactly what we need to move beyond our current debates over gender. In the past and in literature, we can find an abundance of real-life examples of how men and women have understood themselves. Studying gender in this way would show that, however much we may condemn specific expressions of it, we cannot avoid gender altogether, and so to interpret gender relations merely as power relations is to suggest that there is something natural and unavoidable about women's powerlessness. But if we allow ourselves to consider the possibility that gender differences are not always a disguise for power differences, this trap disappears. At the same time, such a study would also show that, in fact, while we cannot change who has the babies, we bear a great deal of responsibility for what men and women look like as social creatures, and we cannot get out of that responsibility, or shift it to others, by an appeal to our "natures."

Because gender is fundamentally a way in which we make sense of ourselves as embodied creatures, no investigation of gender can allow itself to be carried too far off from the body. Gender reminds us that our bodies are not merely tools that we use to various ends. Our bodies are ourselves; their gender has a meaning and a value that is not merely instrumental. This is an important truth that Pope John Paul II emphasized in his theology of the body, defining masculinity and femininity as "two complementary ways of being conscious of the meaning of the body."

Another advantage of a body-focused understanding of gender is that it will help us to stay balanced in our assessment of our sameness and difference. Perhaps men and women are most different during procreation, when each of them perform functions the other is biologically unable to do. The farther from procreation we get—into the home, the workplace, the social sphere, the political sphere—the more careful we should be in our proclamations of what is naturally male and female. A discussion of gender that stays focused on our gendered bodies will help keep us from overemphasizing either sameness or difference, because, when we look at the human body, we see both.

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Kierkegaard's Voices

SØREN KIERKEGAARD: A BIOGRAPHY
By JOAKIM GARFF
Translated by BRUCE H. KIRMMSE
Princeton University Press
872 pp. $35.

Reviewed by Gregory R. Beabout

WHEN SØREN KIERKEGAARD lay dying in Copenhagen 150 years ago, it would have been hard to predict the influence his work would later have. European Christendom already appeared to be in terminal decay, and Kierkegaard's main purpose as a writer was to awaken his readers and to convince them of the necessity, and difficulty, of radical Christian discipleship. At his death he had good reasons to doubt whether his work would have much effect on future readers.

To begin with, he had written entirely in Danish—very much a minor language. His fate, he feared, was to be a forgotten writer from a provincial market town: "I write books which presumably will not be read." Even in Denmark, none of his dozens of volumes sold more than a thousand copies during his life. His genius wasn't altogether overlooked by his contemporaries; Danish newspapers eulogized him, predicting he would "assume a prominent place in Danish history." But he felt himself condemned to be, at most, a big fish in a very small pond.

The larger problem with Kierkegaard's work was its severity: he offered a stern rebuke and an even sterner challenge to an entire religious establishment. In Denmark, baptism in the state church had become a matter-of-course rite of citizenship. Indeed, for Kierkegaard, "Christendom" had become a mistaken baptizing of nearly everything: Where real Christianity called for a transformation of one's whole life, Christendom simply "christened" everything—giving it a new name and leaving it otherwise unchanged. "What Christianity wanted was chastity—to do away with the whorehouse. The change is this, that the whorehouse remains exactly what it was in paganism, lewdness in the same proportion, but it has become a 'Christian' whorehouse."

Kierkegaard was only half right to despair of his legacy. The language was a barrier: For almost fifty years after his death, he remained unknown outside Denmark. But once his work began to be translated, his influence spread rapidly, until he is now widely regarded as one of the great philosophical minds of the nineteenth century.

But his efforts to bring Christianity to European Christendom have been largely ineffective, especially in his homeland. Today, almost all Danes are baptized, but less than five percent of them regularly attend church—one of the lowest percentages in Europe. And polls suggest that the country is no more Christian in belief than in practice: half of all Danes say God doesn't matter in their life at all.

From this modern, post-Christian Denmark now comes Joakim Garff's massive and provocative new biography, in an elegant and brisk translation by Bruce H. Kirmmse. When Garff's work first appeared in Danish five years ago, it received much praise for its passionate and novelistic presentation of Kierkegaard's life and times. In retelling the story of Kierkegaard's short career, Garff set himself two goals: "to reinstall Kierkegaard in his own time," and to separate the facts about the man from the myths created by his several self-depictions.

The biography is quite successful at achieving its first goal. Garff gives a vivid description of life in the Copenhagen of the 1830s. He provides a particularly splendid account of the city's literary elite, who frequently wrote their most lively commentaries under pseudonyms. J.L. Heiberg, for instance, used the underscore symbol "_" to sign his articles while he was the editor of a leading journal. "The merriment took on such proportions that writers who wished to remain incognito eventually used up all the uppercase and lowercase letters in both the Latin and Greek alphabets, and people finally had to resort to using numbers."

When Kierkegaard was twenty-two years old, he made his first foray into this literary hothouse. Writing as "B" in Heiberg's journal, Kierkegaard composed a stunning *jeu d'esprit*. His article was such a hit

GREGORY R. BEABOUT *is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Saint Louis University and an adjunct scholar with the Acton Institute's Center for Academic Research.*

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that some thought Heiberg himself must have written it. Suddenly, Kierkegaard found himself on the inside of a group of Hegelian romantic dandies. He was leading the kind of life he would later criticize as a form of empty despair.

The characters and culture of Denmark are not the only things that seem animated in Garff's writing. The city of Copenhagen itself comes alive. We feel as though we are following the author as he walks through the city's streets, smelling the odors of the marketplace, and catching sight of Kierkegaard as he strolls through the town's crowds to take his daily "people bath."

Garff's second goal in his biography is less creditable. He tells us that he wanted to find the "cracks in the granite of genius, the madness just below the surface, the intensity, the economic and psychological costs of the frenzies of writing, as well as the profound and mercurial mysteriousness of a figure with whom one is never really finished"—in short, to unearth the "Kierkegaard complex."

The "Kierkegaard complex," it turns out, is not so different from the Oedipus complex. The author suggests that Kierkegaard's overbearing father made it impossible for him to enter into normal human relationships, especially with women. Pent-up libidinal desires resulting from an overactive super-ego inevitably led to revolt and misery, which was soothed but never healed by the therapeutic sublimation of artistic production.

Though Freud is hardly mentioned in the biography, it's his intellectual framework that provides the outlines of the story—explaining Kierkegaard's scruples, his broken engagement with Regine Olsen, and his constant literary output. Garff seems to assume that the message of Kierkegaard's father (to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself) is irrational and impossibly demanding. The effort to obey this teaching, involving as it does the repression of the libido, must result in self-torment and ultimately illness.

At certain points, this way of understanding Kierkegaard's life seems useful. His father was indeed overbearing, and certainly Garff's account of Kierkegaard's attack on Christendom in the final years of his life makes Kierkegaard seem both unhappy and profoundly frustrated.

But as an overall interpretation of Kierkegaard's life, Garff's Freudian diagnosis is finally unconvincing. It requires the biographer, for instance, to take too many liberties in reconstructing the relation between father and son. Michael Kierkegaard may have been brooding and domineering, but that doesn't—or doesn't have to—explain why he taught his children to practice the virtues of temperance and chastity. Garff seems unable to imagine how any healthy person could consider these things forms of excellence. And so we are told that the father "put a fateful mark upon the son's desire, reversing what is natural and unnatural, and to this extent had sexually molested his child."

Here Garff is following Freud, of course, whereas Kierkegaard and his father belonged to the classic Christian tradition of moral reflection. Kierkegaard thought that our desires, emotions, thoughts, and relations could be educated. Following Augustine, he tried to show that a person whose desires are educated comes to see that an infinite desire for the finite is a recipe for despair: our hearts are restless until they rest in God.

Garff operates always with suspicion, never quite trusting Kierkegaard's account of things—either in his published work or in the many volumes of journals he left for posterity. This distrust motivates Garff to search for other sources; he is interested in everything any of his contemporaries ever wrote about Kierkegaard. He searches out report cards, bank records, diaries, and letters. He has done his homework, and his massive research provides us with a picture of Kierkegaard that is multi-textured. But it also distracts Garff from what is most important, and he loses sight of Kierkegaard's own self-understanding.

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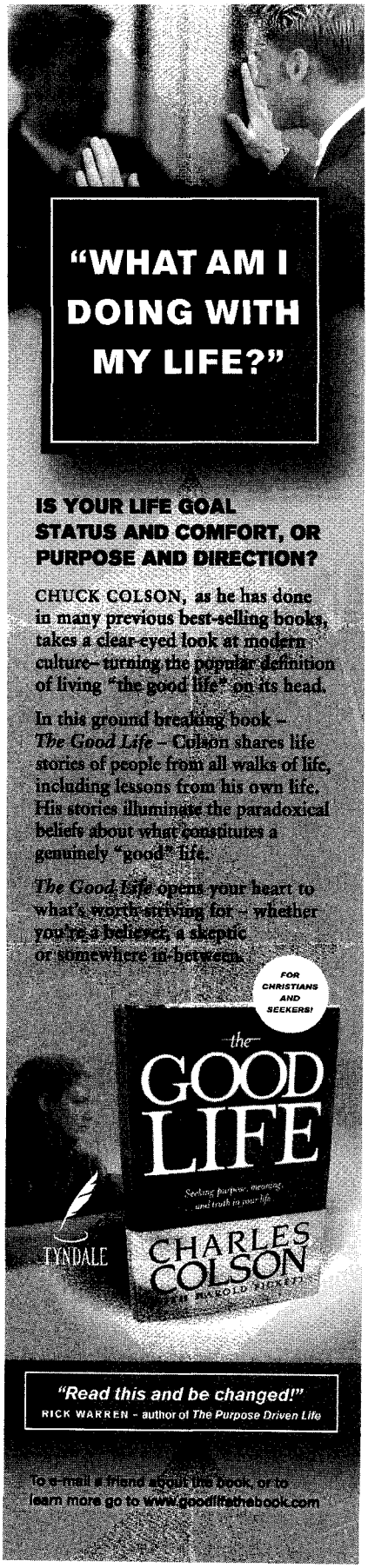
We learn a great deal about the mentors against whom Kierkegaard rebelled—particularly Heiberg, the Hegelian litterateur, and Mynster, the Danish bishop—but, strangely, we learn almost nothing about the only mentor to whom Kierkegaard dedicated a book: his philosophy professor Poul Martin Møller. And despite extensive treatment of the political changes of 1848, there is little discussion of the impact of democratization on the Danish Church. Garff does not always do enough to help the reader judge how many of Kierkegaard's complaints about the local Church were warranted.

In truth, the Kierkegaard we meet reading Garff is not as richly complicated as the Kierkegaard we meet reading Kierkegaard himself. Like any brilliant stylist, Kierkegaard was aware that his first audience was always a fiction: part of his job as a writer was to imagine his reader. He expected that his reader would in turn have enough imagination to conjure up a sense of an implied author, and he did everything he could to help him do so. In this sense, Kierkegaard is like Plato, who almost never puts himself in his own writing, except once to tell us of his presence (at Socrates' trial) and once to tell us of his absence (at Socrates' death). Plato is implied throughout his dialogues, yet the flesh-and-blood Plato is always in the background, behind the text.

Were a reader of Plato's dialogues to become overly concerned with Plato the man—worrying about the details of his financial situation or hypothesizing about possible sexual lapses—it would become impossible to engage the dialogues in a serious way. This is not to say that we must accept Plato's purposes every step of the way. And we might be legitimately curious about the real man behind the texts. But we can't do justice to Plato the philosopher if we are constantly sidetracked by speculations about whether Plato the man really lived up to his own teachings. By focusing solely on the historical Plato, we'll miss other important questions: Where is Plato being ironic? What virtues does Plato want me, as his reader, to develop? Are there good reasons why I should reject his arguments or distrust the story he is telling?

Kierkegaard liked to play with the boundaries that separated him from the authors and narrators of his books. Part of the joy of reading him is the encounter with these various voices. After one has sorted out the pseudonyms, there is still the challenge of discovering how, for Kierkegaard, a difference of voice implies a difference of character—how vice and virtue are embodied in a style. By registering these differences, Kierkegaard becomes, by way of indirection, a moral teacher. By charting the rhetorical strategies of his implied authors and narrators, he awakens us to our own self-deceptions and urges us toward a supernatural integrity—a right relation with God, others, and ourselves. And he hopes to do the same for himself.

Garff's approach tramples over this complexity. With his boundless interest in the flesh-and-blood Kierkegaard, the biographer seems deaf to the delicate counterpoint between implied author and implied reader. That counterpoint is not a mere fiction; it is a central part of Kierkegaard's project that here gets lost in the rush of detail. In its historical scope and in the richness of its descriptions, Garff's *Søren Kierkegaard* sets a new standard for Kierkegaard scholarship. It has done more to help us understand Kierkegaard's social milieu than any other biography. But it does not always succeed in helping us to understand Kierkegaard's work in its own terms. While searching for "cracks in the granite," Garff too often neglects the real seam of Kierkegaard's moral and literary genius.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Reviewed by Russell Hittinger

IN THE SPORT of religion jurisprudence, the cats sometimes catch the mice. In October 1997, for example, federal district judge Ira DeMent issued an injunction forbidding religious activities in and around public schools in Alabama. Forbidden activities included "Bible and religious devotional or scriptural readings; distribution of religious materials, texts, or announcements; and discussions of a devotional or inspirational nature, regardless of whether the activity is initiated, led by, or engaged in by students." The injunction set up a system of monitors to enter classrooms, visit athletic events, and observe activities—in order to collect complaints and verify compliance. Public schools were commanded to conduct mandatory "in-service training" sessions, designed to educate school officials in "the general contours of Establishment Clause and Free Exercise principles as the court has explained them."

For the next four years, the injunction would occupy the attention of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, which eventually weakened it considerably. Even the federal bench could eventually see that there are more mice than cats and that the mice have clever lawyers.

The DeMent injunction is a token of the sometimes comical plight of the federal judiciary on religious matters. How did the august judicial branch of the American government find itself goaded by teenagers with religious tracts, swamped in litigation that would boggle even the sharpest exegetes, and forced into applying "tests" that seem implausible, contradictory, and, what is worse, contemptible for their weakness? How did it happen that members of the Supreme Court could routinely refer to one another's opinions as "totally incorrect," "unsound," "courting anarchy," "laying waste venerable customs," "inherently ethnocentric," "outright perverse," "ridiculous," "pure fantasy," "pernicious," "absurd and offensive," bordering "on paranoia," and an "Orwellian rewriting of history"?

James Hitchcock's new study, *The Supreme Court and Religion in American Life*, provides for the general reader a useful road map through the history and case law. The first of the two volumes tells the history rather comprehensively, with a minimum of interpretive overlay. The second tries to understand the story.

Hitchcock's work is especially valuable for his extensive coverage of the Court's religion jurisprudence before the deluge—that is, before the 1940s, when the Court deliberately made itself a tribunal of the nation's religious disputes. For the first century and a half of the nation's history, the Court diligently avoided expanding the scope of the religion clauses of the Constitution. Although from time to time the executive and legislative branches (as well as some states) experimented with "separationism"—attempting even to constitutionalize the doctrine—the Court kept its hands clean. It decided cases, but it was not a purveyor of "doctrine."

One reason is that religious disputes rarely reached the Court under the rubric of the religion clauses of the First Amendment. As Hitchcock shows, the earliest and most persistent religious issues involved property: land grants, inheritance, trusts and bequests, division of property in parishes and national denominations, legal enforcement of contracts and religious vows to surrender per-

RUSSELL HITTINGER *is the Warren Professor of Catholic Studies and Research Professor of Law at the University of Tulsa.*

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sonal property to a religious group, and the rights of foreign missionaries to acquire land.

IN ONE OF the earliest cases, *Dartmouth College v. New Hampshire* (1819), a state governor and legislature tried to dismiss a private college's trustees in order to make the college a state school and emancipate it from its allegedly "medieval" religious mission. Justice Marshall ruled that the royal charter—which created the school to advance the spread of Christianity and piety—was binding and the state's attempt to alter the institution was a breach of contract.

Although it usually protected the integrity of church polity, the Court typically did so by applying the ordinary law of contracts, trusts, and corporations. So strong was its reluctance to engage in speculative doctrine in cases touching upon religion that, when necessary, the Court consulted the positive law of foreign jurisdictions. It had to do so in the case of royal grants contested after the colonies became states. But it also did so in two of the era's more complicated and fascinating pieces of litigation.

One case came out of Louisiana, where it was contended that one of the claimants to a will was illegitimate because his parents contracted a marriage by mere consent when the area was still under Spanish jurisdiction. Although Catholic canon law did not countenance such unions after 1563, it turned out that Spanish colonial law had incorporated the pre-Tridentine canons, according to which the marriage was valid. In a similar case, where a priest had declared a marriage bigamous, the Court discovered that ecclesiastical investigations into bigamy required the permission of Spanish royal courts, and, such permission not having been obtained, the claimant to the will was deemed legitimate. The Court refused to posit historical ruptures in the organic law.

All of this stood in marked contrast to the treatment of church polity and property in Europe, where ecclesiastical institutions were submitted to various *Kulturkämpfen* supervised by government authorities. Interestingly, the Court had several opportunities to play the role of their European counterparts. In *Vidal v. Girard's Executors* (1844), a philanthropist's descendants sought to overturn his will because it endowed a boys school in Pennsylvania with the strict provision that no clergyman should ever teach there. Daniel Webster argued before the Court that the will embodied the anti-clerical ideas of Thomas Paine, and thus violated the common law strictures against blasphemy. Here, the Court might have succumbed to the temptation to weigh the relative merits of religion and secularism in education; instead, it affirmed that Christianity is part of the state's common law, and then ruled narrowly that Girard intended no such insult in his will.

Then, in *Permoli v. New Orleans* (1845), the Court had a chance to extend the scope of the free-exercise provision of the First Amendment. A Catholic priest was convicted of violating a municipal statute forbidding funerals in churches rather than in cemeteries. He argued that the ban breached the First Amendment, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which protected religious liberty in the territories, and the state constitution of Louisiana. What better chance to give judicial force to a great principle of liberty? The Court, however, ruled that the Northwest Ordinance ceased to bind Louisiana once it became a state in 1812, and that the Constitution protects religious liberty against Congress, not the states. In the *Holy Trinity* case (1892), the Court had to consider a Congressional act that limited religious liberty. After Congress passed a law forbidding importation of foreigners to work in the United States, a suit was brought by an Episcopal parish in New York City that wished to hire a British rector. The Court ruled that the law was wrongly applied. Justice Brewer reasoned that because the United States was a "Christian nation" that had no public practices deliberately hostile to religion, Congress could not have intended to forbid the reception of foreign nationals as ministers.

ONE OF THE best chapters in Hitchcock's study is "The Faiths of the Justices," in which he examines the religious affiliations and ideas of Supreme Court justices from John Marshall to Stephen Breyer. Interestingly, until the 1940s, the religion of the individual justices provides almost no clue to how they will rule on cases involving religion. Justice Bradley—who abhorred religious doctrines, held that the Jewish scriptures are full of "crudities," and believed that Paul perverted the primitive message of Jesus—not only defended the role of traditional religion in common law, but went so far as to uphold sabbatarian laws by citing ancient Jewish observances. Justice Brewer, a staunch Congregationalist, gave as evidence that the United States is a "Christian nation" the voyages of Christopher Columbus at the behest of "their Catholic majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella." The second Catholic on the Court, Joseph McKenna, upheld a contract requiring the teaching of Calvinism in a school founded by missionaries in Hawaii. Justice McReynolds, who was vociferously anti-German, and who was deemed one of the most bigoted and racist members of the Court, upheld the rights of parochial schools in *Meyer* (1923) and *Pierce* (1925), even though in the *Meyer* case the issue turned on the teaching of German. Justice Hughes, who led a fight to eliminate Baptist requirements at his alma mater, Brown University, and who had little use for Catholics, upheld the legal enforce-

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ability of the monastic vow of poverty insofar as it affected incomes earned by royalties.

But beginning in the 1940s, the personal faith of justices began to influence how they would rule in cases. "In 1947," Hitchcock writes, "for probably the first time in its history, the Court was composed of a majority who were alienated from the religions of their youth, men who had come to believe that the faiths in which they had been raised were to some extent false and even pernicious." More, a new philosophy of civil rights and liberties was emerging worldwide, in response to the dictatorships and the war. Religion became an occasion for the more aggressive doctrine of civil liberties. In a seven-year period, from 1940 to 1947, both religion provisions of the First Amendment were "incorporated" against the states through the Fourteenth Amendment.

Incorporation of these clauses removed the old firewall that had allowed justices to treat religious disputes without regard to the First Amendment. Religion in public life now became a fully constitutional issue. Having little case law to guide the new judicial endeavor, the Court had to construct a "doctrine." One leg of that doctrine was that the Founding Fathers were separationists—a false legend that proved to be a dead end for legal reasoning; it allowed critics to hoist the doctrine of separation on its own "historical" petard.

Hitchcock argues that the new jurisprudence was in search not of a historically grounded position but of a doctrine that made acts of establishment "intolerable in themselves." In the *Flast* decision (1968), the Court threw open the gates of litigation by adopting the principle that standing to sue (for violations of the establishment clause) depends not on a showing of injury but solely on one's status as a taxpayer. Under the Court's insistence that establishment includes, as Justice Black put it, "religion in general," huge tracts of territory came open for law suits: not merely churches and specific theological doctrines, but moments of silence, Christmas trees, soup kitchens, and an indefinite array of animate and inanimate things.

Hitchcock shows how the quest for a new, comprehensive First Amendment doctrine destroyed the obvious, inherited foundations: strong historical continuity with the founding era and subsequent case law, civil religion, and the idea of a "higher law." Aware of the free-floating nature of the project, the Court in the 1970s attempted to translate the big doctrine into little ones, spelled out in "tests." The *Lemon* decision (1971), for instance, held that state actions must avoid unnecessary entanglement with religion, must have a predominately secular purpose, and must have a primary effect that neither advances nor inhibits religion.

This presupposed, however, that the Court would be able to pick out, non-arbitrarily, what counts as "secular" or "religious" in entanglements, purposes, and effects. Beginning with the *Lynch* decision (1984), justices endeavored to apply yet another "test"—the reasonable-observer test, in which the Court would decide whether a hypothetical person would detect the presence or absence of forbidden religious "effects" in public places. This test, in turn, led the justices to distinguish between a "reasonable person" and a "casual passerby."

All of this, despite the Court's insistence that religion is essentially subjective or tribal. According to Justice Brennan, the Court itself can be blinded by "ethnocentric" interpretations of religion. "It can hardly be doubted," averred Justice Blackmun, that secular things "take on a religious nature" when promoted theologically by "religious figures." The perspective of some observers renders the "effect" religious.

In short order, religion jurisprudence became just what John Courtney Murray had warned against: "articles of faith" masquerading as "articles of peace." In *Allegheny* (1989), Justice Blackmun asserted that it is the "purpose" of the Establishment Clause to protect "the logic of secular liberty." What about religious liberty? In his discussion of the *McCollum* decision (1948), Felix Frankfurter asserted, "In this country, the church is *subordinate* to the state." This premise would have been acceptable to many nineteenth-century European regimes, but the struggle over subordination is precisely what the Court avoided in its first century and a half. Hitchcock concludes: "The modern Court sees religious liberty as a conditional freedom only, not merely in the obvious sense that society cannot tolerate everything done in the name of religion but in the sense that believers may claim freedom for themselves only to the extent that they adhere to the separationist understanding."

In *Everson* (1947), Justice Rutledge insisted that religious believers must be the ones to retreat from any conflict. "Like St. Paul's freedom, religious liberty with a great price must be bought. And for those who exercise it most fully, by insisting upon religious education for their children mixed with secular, by the terms of our Constitution the price is greater than for others." Hitchcock wryly notes that Rutledge, the son of a Baptist minister, must have known that in Acts 22:28 Paul answered a similar charge with the claim: "But I was born free." This passage illuminates the hapless work of Judge DeMent, who tried to make the teachers and teenage students in Alabama submit to First Amendment "values." A reasonable observer would no doubt conclude that the First Amendment was not meant to be a platform for ritually reenacting Paul's colloquy with the Roman magistrate.

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Why We Work

JUST WORK
By RUSSELL MUIRHEAD
Harvard University Press
224 pp. $24.95.

Reviewed by Gilbert Meilaender

THAT WORK IS essential to human life, few will doubt. Whether it should also hold some more exalted place in life—whether, rather than just working to live, we should also live to work—is less clear. It is an issue to which almost all of us give some thought, yet it is by no means a question easy to unpack and explore. Russell Muirhead, who teaches government at Harvard, undertakes this needed task in *Just Work*. The book is clearly written, if occasionally repetitive, and its argument unfolds in a nicely structured way.

Muirhead affirms the "democratic faith" that "work supports and expresses our dignity." Although there was a time when "progressive" thinkers hoped to abolish work, we now believe that properly ordered work—fitting work—is good for us. Both democratic culture and a market economy push us in the direction of fitting work—that is, freely chosen work which both forms and expresses who we are.

Both the importance for human beings of meaningful work and the pitfalls of that ideal are acknowledged in the concept of fitting work that Muirhead develops. On the one hand, fitting work accentuates our freedom, since it gestures toward work that we ourselves have chosen. But, on the other hand, it also accepts limits, since there may be work for which one is simply not suited, however desired and freely chosen the work may be.

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Moreover, especially in a democratic community, there may be work which, even if freely chosen, seems unsuited for democratic citizens—the man (of whom Studs Terkel wrote), for example, whose job was to stand in the washroom of a hotel and distribute hand towels. And in any community there may be work, such as sweatshop work, which is troubling even when done voluntarily. The problem with such jobs is not that they are useless, nor that the workers do their work involuntarily, but that the job is in "conflict with democratic pride" or destructive of human dignity.

One of the thoughtful features of Muirhead's discussion is that, having offered such examples, he does not immediately conclude that these jobs should be eliminated. The concept of fitting work instead "serves to interrupt the complacency that a premature satisfaction with the fact of consent" might give. It forces us to consider the complexity involved in work, the manner in which work absorbs our attention and energy while at the same time, almost always, constraining us as well.

Having explicated and defended the concept of fitting work, Muirhead must then defend it against a taint that might seem to cling to it: its connection to fixed roles within a hierarchical, aristocratic society. That is to say, if we think of "fit" solely in social terms—that society needs people to do the work for which they are best suited—we may begin to push people in the direction of work they would rather not choose and in which they find little fulfillment.

At least part of the answer to this problem is economic. "The success of markets at solving the problem of social fit without recourse to brute coercion is a crucial part of their legitimacy." Of course, the market is not a perfect solution. It can deform work in a different way, inviting us to think of our work in instrumental terms—not, that is, in terms of its internal satisfactions but in terms simply of the income it provides. Nevertheless, it is "the productive capacity of modern economies" that has made at least some peace between the social meaning of fit (which requires that society's needs be met) and the more personal meaning of fit (for which work is integral to one's sense of self). A practical illustration of this, developed at some length by Muirhead, is the history of "domestic service," a form of work that became increasingly hard to reconcile with democratic equality in America. Many reforms—"abolishing, sharing, and restructuring work"—were proposed to deal with "the servant problem"; yet the real source of progress here has come not so much from these reforms as from technological advances that have made the need for such service less pressing.

HAVING developed his general approach to work in the first four chapters, Muirhead uses the last four to examine the possibility of—and desire for—what we might call an "optimal fit" between the person and the work, a fit in which work is at the heart of one's personal identity. One approach to this that has been very influential in our cultural history is the idea of "the calling," which came to prominence especially in the thought of the Protestant Reformers.

I suspect there was less concern for "personal fit" in the theological idea of vocation than Muirhead imagines. After all, in describing the satisfaction work in one's calling brings, Calvin writes, "Each man will bear and swallow the discomforts, vexations, weariness, and anxieties in his way of life, when he has been persuaded that the burden was laid upon him by God." This is not exactly a man in search of fulfillment or concerned chiefly for his sense of personal identity. As a mat-

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ter of historical description, Muirhead similarly makes too much, I suspect, of Weber's use of "salvation anxiety" to explain the rise of the concept of vocation. But he is not mistaken to see that, if belief in the Caller becomes less pervasive in our culture, the work ethic will lose "its deepest purposive dimensions" and devolve into little more than the search for a satisfying and fulfilling career.

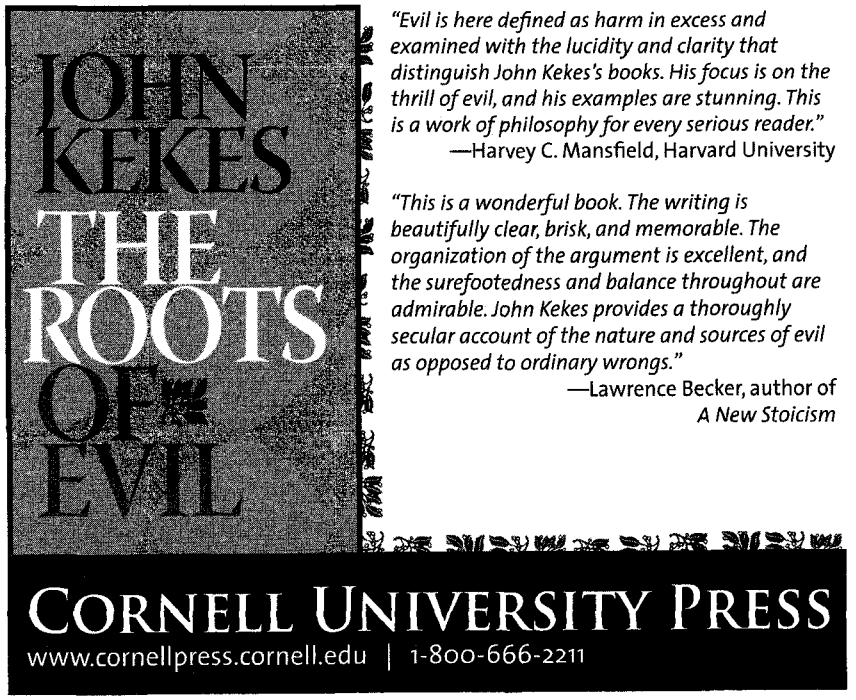
MUIRHEAD DEVOTES a chapter to John Stuart Mill in order to discuss what it might mean to think of a career as fulfilling. There are better ways to do this; indeed, the use of Mill and Rawls in *Just Work*, however understandable from a professor for whom they are undoubtedly staple items, is often less helpful than moments when Muirhead moves farther from the center of his discipline. The salient point, though, is clear: In a democratic world for which "calling" has become "career," the idea of fitting work becomes far less a social ideal and far more an individual aim. It is something each person seeks on the path to fulfillment.

A thoughtful chapter on the twists and turns of Betty Friedan's attitudes toward work gives Muirhead a way to develop this point insightfully. She begins, on his account, with an exaltation of freely chosen work, which fits and expresses one's identity, as the avenue to personal fulfillment: "As the solution to emptiness, work assumes the roles of religion and philosophy." Muirhead notes the irony that, at the very time Friedan was recommending "paid careers as the antidote to women's emptiness," other thoughtful observers—C. Wright Mills, David Riesman, William H. Whyte, and Daniel Bell—were examining how personally stifling many careers had actually become.

It took several decades for Friedan herself to absorb these lessons, but, when she did, her view shifted. Rather than seeing free choice as the avenue to something else that made work fitting for a person, she simply made choice the standard. "Friedan's movement from fitting work to chosen work," Muirhead writes, "suggests the danger that the ideal of fitting work imposes." If one asks too much personal fulfillment from work, one raises the bar so high that no work can satisfy us. And then, positioned to be disappointed, we miss the genuine, if limited, ways in which work can still be meaningful and worthwhile.

Muirhead's own attempt to give meaning to work without inflating our expectations comes from development of the idea of goods internal to a "practice." Ever since Alasdair MacIntyre turned to the concept of a practice in his extraordinarily influential book *After Virtue*, this concept has been used to solve almost every problem imaginable. Still, it does give Muirhead a way to show how sometimes goods can be embedded within work itself and not simply imposed from the outside (whether by a calling from God or merely by an alluring salary). Nevertheless, Muirhead has to grant that there is much work that must be done but which, lacking internal goods, cannot really be understood as a practice. So the tension between the social and the personal in the concept of "fitting work" remains and cannot be fully overcome.

A sober realization of this truth is perhaps the best lesson Muirhead has to teach his readers. Wisely, he wants us to see that work may be very important to human life, but it is not everything. "Even when it fits, work does not engage our whole self." This leaves, of course, an enormous question which Muirhead does not address. What might engage that whole self? That is, of course, well beyond the scope of Muirhead's book, and we cannot ask it of him. Nonetheless, one wonders whether anyone interested in thinking about such a question might need to begin by examining critically the picture of "democratic pride"—opposed, on Muirhead's account, to "selflessness"—that he so readily endorses.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BRIEFLY NOTED

CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO A BRAVE NEW WORLD.
By WESLEY J. SMITH.
Encounter. 219 pp. $25.95.

The Brave New World referred to is that of biotechnology. Specifically, Smith is concerned with the "power of biotechnology to affect the human future by harnessing our bodies at the cellular level." In such harnessing, there can be much good: the curative powers of human stem cells in the treatment of disease and disability have already been demonstrated. But there are questions about which we must think clearly and deeply before we proceed: Should we clone human life, destructively harvest cells or organs, turn ova and embryos into commodities, patent human life, and practice the myriad tempting forms of genetic discrimination that will be within our power? Smith's title wryly refers to "the Consumer" of these services, but in that brave new world there will be, of course, not only the consumers but also the consumed, and the latter are portrayed vividly by Smith: women whose eggs will be farmed; aborted female fetuses who will be bought for their ovaries; imperfect small humans who will be killed if their behavioral profile does not comport with the plans of their parents; small humans manipulated, experimented upon, and discarded; human-animal hybrids created for laboratory experiments. Smith painstakingly clarifies the terminology and procedures of the laboratory science involved, sorts through the commercial, cultural, and moral aspects of the matter, and exposes the obfuscations and misrepresentations of much of the public discourse. He writes that "most of us who oppose human cloning are enthusiastic believers in scientific progress. But we also recognize the dangers inherent in the philosophy of 'anything goes.'" His report on the proven and potential uses of stem cells that are acquired non-destructively from adult donors is very good—and Smith himself would be the first to cheer the fact that his report is in need of supplementation because of new breakthrough studies suggesting that stem cells readily available from adults can be as versatile as stem cells harvested from snuffed-out embryos. Smith's book is an excellent foundational text for readers who wish to join in the grand project of developing a biotechnology that does not threaten human dignity. To paraphrase Pastor Niemöller for the umpteenth time: When they came for the embryos, I said nothing, because I was not an embryo. . . . But, of course, we all were. And even the most avid consumer must realize that when we begin to consume one another, there are no guarantees as to where the consumption will stop.

—J. A. Gray

TURNING TOWARD THE LORD: ORIENTATION IN LITURGICAL PRAYER.
By UWE MICHAEL LANG.
Ignatius. 160 pp. $12.95 paper.

"Turning toward the Lord" is the translation of a phrase St. Augustine often used when he had finished his sermon and was beginning the Eucharistic liturgy. While reading the Scriptures and preaching, Augustine and the lectors faced the congregation; afterwards he, the assisting ministers, and the faithful turned toward the Lord, all facing in the same direction during the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice. In recent times the phrase "facing the people" (*versus populum*) has been used for the current practice in which the priest and people face each other during the Eucharistic prayer. This way of celebrating the Eucharist (not mentioned in the document on the liturgy at Vatican Council II) took hold a generation ago when liturgical scholars and reformers claimed it was the ancient practice. In *Turning Toward the Lord*, the Oratorian Uwe Lang

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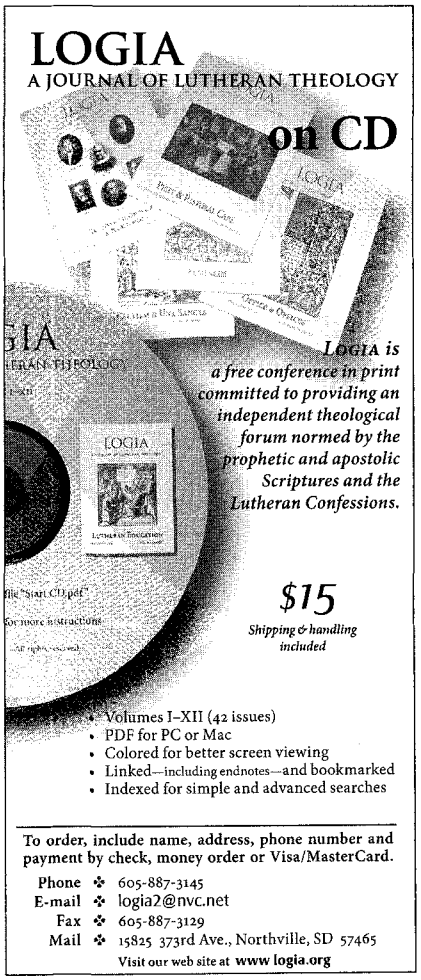
demonstrates that there are no historical grounds for the claim that in the early Church the Eucharist was celebrated "facing the people." All the evidence—literary, theological, archaeological—shows that during the Eucharistic prayer the priest and the faithful faced in the same direction. Not only is the phrase *versus populum* of very late coinage; it does not mean what its champions claim it does. First used in the middle ages, it referred to those points in the Mass when the priest turned to greet or address the people. The phrase had no special theological significance: it did not suggest that the meaning of the Eucharist is expressed more vividly if the priest and people face each other as a community around a common table. The modern meaning imposed on the phrase confuses topography with theology. In the first centuries of the Church, the most important rule about the orientation of liturgical prayer was, literally, that it face the orient. It was taken for granted that Christians should pray toward the rising sun, where the "true light rises." This meant that when the priest began the offertory prayer, he and the faithful all turned toward the east. In most ancient church buildings the apse was to the east, so the presiding minister stood between the altar and the people. But the altar was not the locus of orientation. In those few churches in which the main entrance was to the east and the altar was in the nave, the faithful seem to have occupied the side aisles for the prayer and formed with the clergy a semicircle facing the entrance. The modern practice of having the clergy and people face each other for the offering of the Eucharist is a recent innovation unknown to the early Church. Lang argues in favor of the symbolic significance of the ancient practice, which unites the faithful in a single gesture. *Turning Toward the Lord* includes a preface by then-Cardinal Ratzinger, who says that reading this book will help "the struggle—necessary in every generation—for the right understanding and worthy celebration of the sacred liturgy."

—Robert Louis Wilken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RELATING RELIGION: ESSAYS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION. By JONATHAN Z. SMITH. *University of Chicago Press. 424 pp. $24.*

Jonathan Z. Smith is one of the two or three most widely read and discussed living theorists of religion. He has been publishing in that field for almost forty years, and for thirty years has been teaching at the University of Chicago, which has for several generations been at the center of attempts to constitute and develop an academic discipline called the history of religions. This volume collects thirteen of his published essays, mostly from the last ten years, and adds to them four previously unpublished pieces. The collection is miscellaneous in the sense that the pieces were prompted by different occasions and treat different topics. But there is also a good deal of thematic coherence (and also repetition), since Smith, like all scholars, has a few questions and topics that he returns to with obsessive interest. First among these interests is a range of issues connected with taxonomy and comparison. These are of central concern to historians of religion, who for the last 300 years have been trying to establish a discipline whose central ordering categories—including that of "religion" itself—have had to be established comparatively and from a standpoint whose contours are not altogether clear. Smith shows with considerable learning and occasional wit what the difficulties have been here. If, as has often been the case, scholarly (and judicial) understandings of categories such as "myth," "ritual," "doctrine," "church," and "religion," are developed by taking Christianity as prototype while at the same time obscuring this fact, difficulties are inevitable. It may reasonably be doubted whether Smith succeeds in solving these difficulties with his more deeply structuralist approach, which deploys such analytical pairs as difference/sameness, familiarity/unfamiliarity. And it may be doubted even more reasonably whether the game is worth the candle—whether it can be played without forgetfulness of its own rules. Smith's own method requires him (rightly) to say that any analytical act must be assessed in terms of the interests and purposes of those undertaking it: none has its rightness or inevitability written on its sleeve. But he often forgets this, inveighing against some analyses—including

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theological ones— because of their lack of power or result rather than because he takes their purposes to be in some way dubious. These difficulties notwithstanding, an excellent sense can be had from this volume—and most especially from its opening autobiographical chapter—of the state of play in the academic study of religion.

—Paul J. Griffiths

REAL SEX: THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT CHASTITY.
By LAUREN F. WINNER.
Brazos. 175 pp. $17.99.

A candid, readable, intelligent, and deeply Christian reflection on the meaning of sexuality and the generally unpopular and misunderstood virtue of chastity. Speaking most specifically to people who are young and single, Lauren Winner is the friendly and informed guide many are looking for in living the Christian alternative in a culture of erotic disorder. Although the author is not a Catholic, there are clear intimations of what Catholics call the theology of the body.

STALIN: A BIOGRAPHY.
By ROBERT SERVICE.
Harvard University Press.
714 pp. $29.95.

This will likely serve for a long time as the most authoritative and comprehensive one-volume study of Stalin. The treatment is once over heavily in the sense that almost every paragraph is weighted by a judicious assessment of scholarship on the man and the period. Service portrays Stalin as an intellectual of sorts who read widely, although always within the wobbling worldview of Marxist-Leninism and with an eye to the usefulness of ideas in expanding and maintaining his own power. A mass murderer who consigned millions to death by execution and slave labor, Stalin was perversely rational in terrorizing all potential opposition, knowing that his totalitarianism was not as total as it appeared. In a short and poignant note before his execution, Stalin's colleague Nikolai Bukharin writes, "Why is my death necessary to you?" Despite the unbridled cult of personality, Service regularly notes the large sectors of the population that were persistently, sullenly, and impotently disaffected from Stalin's rule. With his consistent focus on political and economic factors, Service slights cultural and religious developments, although he notes Stalin's use of the Orthodox Church in the Great Patriotic War and, after the war, as his agent during the Cold War in advancing Soviet purposes through Christian ecumenical agencies in the West. There is a strong whiff of "moral equivalence" in Service's account of the Cold War, with Stalin's actions explained as a reaction to America's push for "hegemony." Most curiously, Service is sharply critical of the U.S. for "insulting" Stalin by proposing that he participate in the Marshall Plan on the condition that he adopt something like a market economy. One can hardly imagine the U.S. pouring billions of dollars in aid into what Service consistently depicts as the stifling and corrupt economic practices of the Soviet Union. In an epilogue, "After Stalin," Service describes how the Soviet Union "fell apart" under Gorbachev and Yeltsin, but there is not one reference to Reagan, Thatcher, John Paul II, or other external actors. Nonetheless, *Stalin: A Biography*, with its low-key, frequently wry, and exhaustively researched telling of the story, will be a standard reference for years to come.

MISSING MARY: THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND HER RE-EMERGENCE IN THE MODERN CHURCH.
By CHARLENE SPRETNAK.
Palgrave Macmillan. 270 pp. $24.95.

A beguiling book by a self-consciously liberal Catholic advocating a reappropriation of Marian piety. Spretnak contends that Catholics should be less ecumenically anxious about what Protestants think about what Catholics believe and do, and should move beyond stifling feminist inhibitions about Mary as a figure of subservience. *Missing Mary* is a book that confounds the usual intra-Catholic alignments over what went wrong and right with Vatican II and invites readers to stretch their analogical imaginations in a fuller appreciation of Christian existence that is inescapably Marian.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

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Richard John Neuhaus

ROME DIARY

April 11: Remembering John Paul II

There, on the catafalque only a few feet away, was what remained. Kneeling at the prie-dieu, I had only a few minutes, certainly no more than ten, to think what I wanted to think and pray what I wanted to pray in this moment I had so long anticipated and so irrationally hoped would never come. Odd thoughts came to mind. His back was straight again, after all those years of being so pitiably hunched and trembling from the Parkinson's disease. He seemed much smaller. Perhaps there was not much that could have been done by those who prepared the body. He was emaciated, beaten, and bruised. The purple spots on the hands revealed the efforts, toward the very end, to find one more vein for the intravenous feeding tube. Lying there before the altar, under Bernini's magnificent baldachino, his head was tilted just slightly toward the right. Looking north, I thought—toward Poland.

He has fought the good fight, he has kept the faith. Well done, good and faithful servant. These and other passages came unbidden. Through my tears, I tried to see again the years of his vitality, his charm, his challenge, his triumphs; the historic moments when I admired from a distance and the personal encounters when I was surprised by the gift of an older brother who was the Holy Father.

I had seen him on October 22, 1978, in his first homily as pope, admonishing and encouraging the whole of humanity to be not afraid. I saw him again in Central Park, with hand on cheek in a Jack Benny gesture, mischievously complimenting the crowd's appreciation of his singing a Polish Christmas song. "And you don't even know Polish," he said. I mentioned this when I ate with the pope months later and had to explain to him who Jack Benny was. In such conversations we discussed Nietzsche and Schopenhauer and the ideas that had shaped and misshaped the century, and whether the end of history was at hand. (He thought not.)

Kneeling there, I smiled through my tears. Then the time came to leave. Cardinals, bishops, heads of state, and other dignitaries were waiting their turn. And all the thoughts I wanted to think and all the prayers I wanted to pray were distilled in a half-sobbed, half-whispered, "Thank you, Holy Father."

Walking out of the basilica into the sunlight, a shaken friend said, "That wasn't him, he is isn't there." No, I said, he is there. These are the remains, what is left behind of a life such as we are not likely to see again, waiting with all of us for the resurrection of the dead, the final vindication of the hope he proclaimed.

This morning, three days later, I walked over to St. Peter's Square where thousands and thousands were lined up to see the place where they had put the body. Many were disappointed in their hope of seeing the body when, in the early hours of Friday morning, the basilica had to be closed for the funeral. The crypt, I am told, will not be open to the public until Monday. There he lies in the place previously occupied by John XXIII, who has been moved up into the main church.

Of the 264 popes, 148 are buried in St. Peter's. In his last will and testament, revealed after his death, John Paul indicated that he would like to be buried in Poland, but he said the wishes of the cardinals should be followed. They decided on St. Peter's. There was a

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rumor that Poles were asking that at least his heart should be buried in Poland, a very Polish thing to do. But he is intact in St. Peter's, the 149th.

These have been days that tax superlatives, with events that beggar words. It is reported that four to five million have journeyed to Rome to say goodbye, more than twice the population of the city. Yet everything has gone so smoothly. It seems, in fact, that the city is more peaceful than usual. Huge crowds of mourners packed the square and the Via della Conciliazione, stretching across the Tiber and into the side streets, waiting as long as twenty-six hours to get into the basilica and then, on Friday, to get near the funeral. One hesitates to say that anything is historically unprecedented, but it seems certain that never in human history have so many from so many places in the world gathered to say farewell. He went to the world, and the world came to him. The Poles were especially prominent, waving their flag and singing hymns and national songs. After a thousand years over which their existence was denied and despised by powerful neighbors, John Paul restored their nation to a place of honor in the world.

At the funeral, more than a hundred nations were represented. Despite all the presidents, monarchs, prime ministers, and other dignitaries, security was not conspicuous, which probably means it was very competent. Anyone familiar with the complex history of Catholicism and the American experiment could not help being struck by the presence of an American president, along with two former presidents, at the funeral of a pope. In the media and in conversations, however, nobody has remarked on this remarkable turn of events—but, then, his pontificate always turned the unprecedented into the taken-for-granted. It was unthinkable that President Bush would not be here. What was remarked was the large Jewish delegation and, even more remarked, the many representatives from Islamic nations. Among the titles of the pope is "Pontifex Maximus," the great builder of bridges.

The funeral was exactly as it should have been. Solemn, pulling all the stops of sacred pomp, joining grief and gratitude in a grace-filled exultation of resurrection hope. Exactly right, too, was the homily by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, dean of the College of Cardinals. He made room for the frequent outbursts of sustained applause and shouts of the crowd that John Paul be declared a saint, and be declared so right now.

There was a time in the ancient Church, long before procedures for canonization were codified in the sixteenth century, when saints were declared by popular acclamation, and it almost looked yesterday as though that might happen again. And the shout went up, "Magnus! Magnus!"

For many years I had written that he would be called John Paul the Great, and I do believe it is happening. Of the millions who came to say goodbye, the clear majority were young people in their teens or twenties. Among those impressed by this astonishing response are the cardinals who will elect the next pope, and some of them are saying today that the better part of wisdom is to stay the course of John Paul's pontificate. If continuity is what they are looking for, that may speak well for Cardinal Ratzinger who is so closely identified with the major initiatives of John Paul. Even before yesterday, he was on everybody's list of leading *papabili*.

It takes determination not to discern a providential hand in the convergence of events from the beginning of Holy Week through the funeral of the pope. All in all, the major media made an effort to rise to the occasion. There were notable exceptions, of course. On the *Lehrer News Hour*, I was pitted against the egregious Alan Wolfe of Boston College who railed against Republicans for politicizing the death of Terri Schiavo, thereby politicizing the judiciously countenanced crime in a manner most base. A few days later, the death of John Paul commanded the front page and a large special section of recycled conventional wisdom in the *New York Times*, along with an editorial drawing the moral that his rigid teaching about the sanctity of life denied Terri Schiavo the death with dignity that he himself enjoyed. When will they ever learn?

But, for the most part, the media coverage of the pope's death has been intelligent, respectful, and even reverential. Although there is no way to measure the effect, this has been an extraordinary moment of evangelization. There was the small distraction of the death of Prince Rainier of Monaco, and the much larger distraction of the tawdry "royal wedding" of Prince Charles to his mistress of many years, a wedding postponed for one day so Charles could attend the papal funeral. It appears the monarchy will survive as a national embarrassment, along with a national church that continues, almost five hundred years later, to cater to the unbridled royal appetites to which it owes it existence.

I came to Rome to co-host with Raymond Arroyo the daily broadcasts of EWTN, the international television network founded by the formidable Mother Angelica, whose biography Raymond has just completed. (It is a remarkable story and should be out from Doubleday this fall.) My agreement with EWTN was not exclusive, so I also worked with other print and broadcast media.

George Weigel, author of the definitive biography of John Paul, *Witness to Hope*, came to Rome under exclusive contract with NBC and has been largely

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responsible for that network's generally excellent coverage. Rome in my experience is endless conversations over lunch and dinner, mainly with media types and with friends and acquaintances in the worlds within worlds of the universal Church variously connected to the nerve center that is the Eternal City.

Of course most of the talk is about the next pope, with regular references to "the legacy of John Paul II." It seems most every interview begins with, "What do you think is the chief legacy of John Paul II?" I have by now refined in response a dozen riffs on his "prophetic humanism," his proposing and not imposing a more promising future for the human project, and other themes familiar to the readers of these pages. There are only so many things one can say in five or seven minutes, and one easily wearies of saying them.

Many years ago, when I was a young Lutheran pastor, I complained to my older friend Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel about the tedium of the lecture circuit. "The worst thing," I said, "is that you get tired of hearing yourself saying the same things. Last week I was in Kansas City talking about Christianity and racial justice, and this Saturday I will be in Chicago talking about Christianity and racial justice." Heschel listened patiently as I went on in this vein and then said, "Nuh, Richard, so you think in Chicago they know what you said in Kansas City? Go to Chicago, Richard. Go to Chicago." When on airplanes going I know not where or why, I have over the years often heard the voice of Heschel, "Go to Chicago, Richard. Go to Chicago." And so I once again manage to perk up and respond to the question "What is the chief legacy of John Paul II?" and "Who will be the next pope?"

In Rome and in circles closely connected to Rome, the chatter about the next pope begins the day a new pope is installed. It has understandably been more intense in the last several years of John Paul's undeniable decline. Most of it is idle speculation, as idle as it is inevitable. For the record, this is the state of the chatter shortly after the funeral of John Paul:

• First in alphabetical order and the sentimental favorite of many is Cardinal Arinze of Nigeria. With long years of experience in the Curia, Arinze has many friends in the United States. FIRST THINGS hosted him in New York last year for an ecumenical theological conference. As usual, he was disarmingly charming and candid in response to even the most difficult questions. Many of us think it would be a great thing to have a black African pope, but we don't have a vote. The consensus is that Arinze, while greatly admired, has slight chance of election. "The Church is not ready for an African pope," it is said. That can be read in many ways, some less edifying than others.

• Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires is high on every list. Known as an incisive thinker and intensely holy man living an austere life, it is held against him that he is a Jesuit, although he has suffered the slings and arrows of fellow Jesuits of a more "progressive" bent. No member of a religious order has been elected pope since 1831.

• If the Italians recapture the office, their man could be Tarcisio Bertone of Genoa, a close associate of Ratzinger.

• Darío Castrillón Hoyos of Colombia, Cláudio Hummes of São Paulo, and Oscar Rodríguez Maradiago of Honduras are Latin Americans mentioned. The last is young and eager—some think too young and too eager.

• Ivan Dias of Bombay is an astute theologian who has shown the way in protecting Catholic integrity in the engagement with religious pluralism.

• Among other Italians is Giovanni Battista Re, long in curial experience but without a pastoral track record. Camillo Ruini, vicar of Rome, is greatly respected and was very close to John Paul. Dionigi Tettamanzi of Milan is something of a populist in his appeal and an expert in bioethics, a field of growing interest in moral theology. My impression is that Angelo Scola of Venice may be the leading Italian candidate, but that is perhaps because I have been listening to my friends who are also his friends and are greatly impressed by his intellectual and pastoral skills combined with a deep spirituality.

• Christoph Schönborn of Vienna is often mentioned, but it is deemed a liability that he is young (for a pope) and has shown no marked progress in revitalizing the Church in Austria.

• The only plausible English-speaking *papabile* is the formidable George Pell of Sydney, Australia. He is a friend and I confess I would rejoice in his election, but that seems an unlikely prospect. (The same is true of Francis George of Chicago, but it is thought to be a certainty that no American could be elected, and I tend to agree with the reasons for this.)

It would, I think, be a very good thing to have a pope from Africa, Latin America, or Asia, but the odds at this point favor an Italian. The real alternative is Ratzinger. His election would spark a firestorm of negative reaction from "progressives" in Western Europe and the United States. There is little love for Germans,

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and his long and thankless work as the chief doctrinal officer under John Paul has earned him a reputation as the "enforcer" of orthodoxy. Ratzinger is, in fact, a man of great personal charm and profound holiness. Some years ago he gave FIRST THINGS' annual Erasmus Lecture, and at the ecumenical conference following the lecture he most impressively won the respect and affection of the participating theologians. His homily at John Paul's funeral winsomely displayed a pastoral dimension of the man that many had not suspected. While guaranteed to be labeled "controversial," the election of Joseph Ratzinger would, I believe, be reassuring to many and would provide the Church with leadership in secure continuity with John Paul II.

But again, this is all speculation. The new pope will be chosen in the next month, and faithful Catholics will have no doubt that he is the choice of the Holy Spirit. He may be chosen to advance the great springtime of renewal of which John Paul so often spoke, or to test our faith. In either case, he will be the 265th successor of Peter, and we will, with full assent of heart and mind, acknowledge him as the shepherd of Christ's pilgrim Church on earth.

But now, in the immediate aftermath of the funeral, we are keenly aware that he will not be, nobody could be, another John Paul II. That would be too much to expect. As we had no right to expect the inestimable gift of the man to whom and for whom we now, in grief and gratitude, offer our thanks.

April 21: Habemus Papam

Within hours of the announcement *Habemus Papam* from the loggia of St. Peter's, those who have for years viewed Joseph Ratzinger as the embodiment of all they think is wrong with the Church were publicly exhibiting (to paraphrase Churchill) magnanimity in defeat. Led by Hans Küng, Ratzinger's self-anointed nemesis, they proposed that Ratzinger should be given a grace period, perhaps a hundred days, to demonstrate that he has repented of his reactionary ways.

The responsibilities of his old work, as a prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and the responsibilities of his new work, as pope, are significantly different. The pope, it is rightly said, must strive to be the father (as in "pope") of all the faithful—which is a challenge for him but a greater challenge to those who are dubiously faithful.

With the election of Pope Benedict XVI, the curtain has fallen on the long-running drama of the myth of "the spirit of Vatican II," in which the revolution mandated by the Council was supposedly delayed by the timidity of Paul VI and temporarily derailed for twenty-six years by the regressive John Paul II, as the Church inexorably moved toward the happy denouement of "the next pope" who would resume the course of progressive accommodation to the wisdom of the modern world. The curtain has fallen and the audience has long since left, except for a few diehards who say they are giving the new management a hundred days to revive the show. Some of them are perhaps thinking of going to another theater. There are worse things than not being a Catholic, when it is made unmistakably clear that being a Catholic is not what one is.

I very much doubt that Pope Benedict is going to engage in wholesale excommunications, but I have no doubt he will encourage people to ponder anew what is entailed in being in communion with the Church. He has over the years made evident that he believes we are engaged in a great battle for the soul of Western Civilization and, indeed, the soul of the world. The choice of the name is important. He is not John Paul III. That might have invited invidious comparisons with his illustrious and inimitable predecessor, John Paul the Great, now entombed close by St. Peter. It might also have suggested that the curtain has not fallen on the dramatization of the mythology of "the spirit of Vatican II." The first round of commentaries proposed that the choice of a name is an allusion is Benedict XV, an early twentieth-century pope of limited distinction apart from his failed effort to stop World War I. I am rather confident, however, that the proper allusion is to the original St. Benedict, the father of Western monasticism. In a time of deep shadows, the Benedictine movement sparked the spiritual, cultural, and moral rejuvenation of Europe.

Much has been made of the supposed contrast between John Paul II's confident expectation of a "springtime of evangelization" and Joseph Ratzinger's frequent references to a smaller but more faithful Church which has internalized the words of Jesus that the seed must fall into the ground and die before it can bear much fruit. In this account, John Paul the ebullient is to be contrasted with Ratzinger the dour.

There is a measure of truth in that contrast. Some of it is related to differences in personality, some of it to differences in intellectual formation. Avery Cardinal Dulles summarized the witness of John Paul in the phrase "prophetic humanism." The Ratzinger of the past gave—and the Benedict of the future, will, I expect, continue to give—voice to a more explicit and insistent Christocentric humanism.

This is not to say that John Paul was not Christocentric. There were few passages from the Council that he quoted more often than the declaration from *Gaudium et Spes* that Jesus Christ is not only the revelation of God to man but the revelation of man to himself. The

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suggested contrast between John Paul and Benedict is not a disagreement, but Ratzinger's accent has been more explicitly on the crucified Christ and the necessarily cruciform experience of the Church through time.

It has been suggested that the different accents may reflect the fact that Ratzinger is more Augustinian in his theology while John Paul was more of a Thomist. Both accents issue in the bold admonition, "Be not afraid." That signature phrase of John Paul has been emphatically repeated by Benedict XVI. The crucified Christ is the risen and victorious Christ who, in a favorite passage of Ratzinger's, tells the disciples, "Fear not little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give to you the kingdom." With an emphasis on the *little* in the little flock.

On the basis of his copious writings as Ratzinger, we know that Benedict is robustly skeptical of sociological depictions and analyses of the Church. The general media, as well as many scholars, are obsessed with statistical assessments of the Church's fortunes and misfortunes in history. For Pope Benedict these assessments are almost beside the point. The media will have a hard time adjusting to this. They do not want to talk about revealed truth or the redemption worked by Jesus Christ. Benedict insists that to speak of the Church is to speak of Christ. Which may result in the secular elites in control of the commanding heights of culture declining to talk about either.

The circumstance was nicely summed up by a comment of Ted Koppel on *Nightline* the night of the election. The subject turned to interreligious dialogue, and I had referred to the radical Christocentrism of the new pope. "So which is it, Father," Koppel asked, "Christ or interreligious dialogue?"

But, of course, it is interreligious dialogue because of, and upon the premise of, Jesus Christ as the redeemer of the whole world, including the world's religions in which, as Catholic teaching holds, elements of truth and grace are to be discovered. The same confusion arises with respect to *Dominus Iesus*, a document issued by Ratzinger's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith a few years ago, which is regularly cited as claiming that "Catholicism is more true than other religions and even other Christian churches." But of course. There is but one Christ and therefore, at the deep level of theological understanding, there can be only one Church, and the Catholic Church claims to be that Church most fully and rightly ordered through time. That is not in tension with ecumenism; it is the foundation of the ecumenical quest for full communion among all Christians.

The argument that Ratzinger has tried to make through these many years, and the argument that Benedict will undoubtedly be making, is that there is no tension, never mind conflict, between truth and love. The caricature is that liberals are big on love while conservatives are big on truth. As Ratzinger said in his homily before the conclave, love without truth is blind and truth without love is empty. Without truth, love is mere sentimentality and, without love, truth is sterile.

This is, of course, in perfect continuity with John Paul's favored passage from *Gaudium et Spes* that Christ—who is the way, the truth, and the life—is the revelation of man to himself. If Christ is the truth about everyone and everything, then the way forward is by following the way of Christ. This is the genuine progressivism proposed to the Church and the world by John Paul and by Benedict. The Church does not seek to be countercultural, but it is unavoidably counter to the modern mindset in proposing that fidelity and continuity, not autonomy and novelty, are the paths toward a more promising future.

The chatter goes on as to whether Benedict will change this or that "policy" of John Paul, as though each new pope reinvents Catholicism. There is, beyond doubt, development in the life of the Church, but on questions of great theological and moral moment there is not change. The office of the papacy is very limited. The pope's job is to defend, preserve, and transmit the "faith once delivered to the saints," as that faith is received in Scripture and Spirit-guided tradition. A pope who acts as though doctrine is no more than a policy option is a very bad pope.

Within the continuing tradition, the Second Vatican Council is an extraordinary moment of development and refinement. Among the many achievements of the pontificate of John Paul II, some would say the *most* important achievement, was to secure the hermeneutic for the interpretation of that great council. Joseph Ratzinger was an invaluable partner in that achievement, and the partner has now become the heir who will build upon that achievement.

The day of his election was, in the calendar of the Church, the day of Leo IX, the last great German pope. Ratzinger is more a Bavarian than a German, Bavaria having a distinct identity that goes back long before the Prussian invention of modern Germany in the nineteenth century. But I am sure he sees some striking parallels between the eleventh-century reign of Leo and the needs of our time. Which is, once again, to recognize the bond with the first Benedict who set out to reconstruct, beginning with the Church, a civilization that had fallen into ruins. The new pope's most determined opponents will be those who, in the words of St. Paul, boast of their shame and demand that the Church not only acquiesce in, but give her blessing to, the devastation conventionally called progress. The achievements of modernity, which are considerable, are

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fragile and prone to self-destruction unless grounded in the truth, and the truth, ultimately, is the Son of God who, as St. John puts it, was sent not to condemn the world but to save the world.

Pope Benedict XVI is seventy-eight years old, and some speak of a brief transitional pontificate. I do not expect it will be brief, and I am sure it will not be transitional, if transitional means a holding action until the next pontificate. He has very definite views on what needs to be reformed in the Church, including much that in recent decades was called reform, and he will in his self-effacing but determined way press for changes in the service of a continuity that has too often been recklessly violated.

In this respect, he will be carrying forward the work of John Paul the Great in bringing together again the great themes of the Second Vatican Council: *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. The reappropriation of the tradition and the conversation with the contemporary world are not two agendas, one dubbed conservative and the other liberal, but the two essential dimensions of the renewal of the Church.

And, if the Council is right in saying that the Church is the sacrament of the world, renewal of the Church is the way toward the renewal of the world, as the first Benedict believed and so powerfully demonstrated.

FT

THE TYRANNY OF THE MINORITY

"There is strength in numbers, but there is not truth." Leon Wieseltier is right about that. Writing in the *New Republic*, he is complaining about the Supreme Court justices who, in oral argument about the Ten Commandments case, keep saying "we are a religious nation." Wieseltier writes, "But what does the prevalence of a belief have to do with its veracity or with its legitimacy?" Little or nothing, one might agree. But the justices were making a more modest but not unimportant point—that a government must be aware of the kind of people it governs, in this case a characteristically religious people.

Wieseltier continues: "If every American but one were religious, we would still have to construct our moral and political order upon respect for that one." Well, yes, respect. That is required by our commitment to rights, a commitment firmly grounded in, among other things, the religious beliefs of most Americans. But Wieseltier seems to be saying that "respect" means that the one dissenter would have veto power over how we construct our moral and political order. That would be the death of our republican form of democratic government. The Constitution's "We the People" never pretended to be unanimous. Whatever else democracy means, it means majority rule, and our form of democracy also assiduously protects minority rights.

Wieseltier seems to think that democracy requires eliminating the concepts of majority and minority: "The proposition that 'we are a religious nation' is like the proposition that 'we are a white nation' or that 'we are a Christian nation' or that 'we are a heterosexual nation,' which is to say it is a prescription for the tyranny of a majority." Not quite. The statement that "we are a white nation" is redolent of a long and tragic history of oppression, and anyone who employs it is rightly suspected of racism. As a social description, however, it is true that about 80 percent of the population is ordinarily designated as white, about the same percentage is Christian of one sort or another, and fully 97 percent is heterosexual. These are simply social facts, not prescriptions for how we are "to construct our moral and political order."

Our moral and political order does not require that we forbid the public mention of social facts. It would be a very fragile moral and political order that depended upon pretended ignorance of social facts. Consider the proposition that "we are a capitalist nation" or "we are an English-speaking nation" or "we are a sports-loving nation." In each instance, there is not just Wieseltier's one dissenter. Add up the socialists, non-English speakers, and those indifferent to sports, and we're talking about millions of dissenters. That in no way affects the truth of the above generalizations about the kind of nation we are. Wieseltier apparently does not fear that the acknowledgment of those generalizations is "a prescription for the tyranny of a majority." He fears only the acknowledgment that we are a religious nation. One has to wonder why that should be.

Is the government forcing anyone to be religious or penalizing those who are not? If, as is the case, there is absolutely no evidence that the government is doing or will do that, is not Mr. Wieseltier's fear simply irrational? It would seem that that irrational fear is combined with the curious view that democracy requires a studied indifference to majorities and minorities and a pretended ignorance of the nature of the society of which we are part.

"We are a religious nation." It seems Mr. Wieseltier wishes that were not so. He certainly does not want the fact to be publicly recognized by government officials. On both scores, I am rather sure, he is in a distinct minority. That is a perfectly honorable and securely

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protected status. We should "construct our moral and political order" to protect his right to his opinion, and, as a matter of fact, that has been done. There is no reason why we should construct our moral and political order to conform to his opinion. To do so would be, if I may paraphrase Mr. Wieseltier, a sure prescription for the tyranny of the minority.

FT

THE POLITE GENTILES

Rabbi Daniel Lapin of *Toward Tradition* airs a question that I expect most Jews think should be aired, if at all, only among Jews. His reflections are prompted by the movie *Meet the Fockers*, starring Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand. He is especially disappointed with Streisand because he had coached her in the film *Yentl* and hoped she was above this kind of thing. "In spite of having several Jewish producers and several Jewish stars," writes Lapin, "this film's vile notions of Jews are not too different from those used by Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels." The *argumentum ad Hitlerum*, as Milton Himmelfarb once called it, makes one nervous. Lapin continues, "The movie depicts the conspicuously Jewish parents as sexually obsessed, constantly concupiscent degenerates. Nice people, but depraved." He is put in mind of the defamatory depiction of Jews in Woody Allen films: "If Woody Allen were not Jewish, surely every Jewish organization would have roundly denounced him."

What is it with the Jews?—is Rabbi Lapin's question. He mentions potty-mouthed sexpert Dr. Ruth Westheimer, as well as the execrable Howard Stern and Jerry Springer, who also flaunt their Jewishness. Then there is the Jewish pornographer who goes by the name of Ron Jeremy and boasts of having acted in or directed more than 1,500 porn films, explaining, "Jewish families tend to be more liberal than Christian ones; they aren't obsessed by the fear of the devil or going to hell." A profile in *Jewish Journal* reassuringly notes that Jeremy plans to be married in a synagogue. "You'd have to be a recent immigrant from Outer Mongolia," writes Lapin, "not to know of the role that people with Jewish names play in the coarsening of our culture. Almost every American knows this. It is just that most gentiles are too polite to mention it."

Lapin says he is describing "anti-Semitism perpetrated by Jews rather than by non-Jews." He cites a passage from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* describing the meretricious influence of Jews and observes: "It does not excuse Hitler or his Nazi thugs for us to acknowledge that this maniacal master propagandist focused on a reality that resonated with the educated and cultured Germans of his day. Not once in *Mein Kampf* did that monster charge Jews with being complicit in the killing of Christ two thousand years earlier. He knew that long-ago event, shrouded in mystery and theological profundity, would never goad enlightened people to murder. Instead, he drew attention to the obvious and inescapable; that which every German knew to be true."

After listing more instances of the culture-debasing activities of Jews, Lapin writes: "We Jews routinely depict ourselves in repugnant caricatures of people you'd want nothing to do with in real life. Why do my colleagues in Jewish communal leadership never condemn this anti-Semitism? For, if it is not anti-Semitism, what is?" Yet Jewish organizations went all out in their assault on Mel Gibson's *The Passion*. "A year after its release, and after polls show increased regard for Jews among the film's audiences, Jewish organizations still condemn *The Passion* as defamatory to Jews. Yet, astonishingly, they don't consider the examples I cite as defamatory to Jews." "Do you suppose that people's view of what Jews are really like is shaped more by Caius, an obscure two-thousand-year old character in *The Passion* or by the contemporary couple played by Streisand and Hoffman? Which movie more egregiously defames Jews?"

Rabbi Lapin makes serious charges which, although directed against his fellow Jews, should be taken seriously also by Christians. Some distinctions are in order. He is certainly right about the wrong of the organized Jewish attacks on *The Passion*, and it is true that some Jewish reviewers let their obvious indifference or hostility to that central Christian story control their evaluation of the film. And he is surely right that, if gentiles depicted Jews the way that Woody Allen and others do, they would immediately be accused of anti-Semitism.

Are Jews disproportionately represented in the pornography industry? It is regularly said so, also by Jews. But that, if true, is quite distinct from the self-deprecatory humor of Jews in theater and films that Lapin too readily, it seems to me, describes as self-defamation. Is Jackie Mason anti-Semitic either in intent or effect? I don't think so. I haven't seen *Meet the Fockers*, and it may be as bad as Rabbi Lapin says, but some of the films that concern him are aimed at mainly non-Jewish audiences, inviting them to join in the mainly good-spirited laughter at these crazy Jews. This has been going on in the American world of entertainment for many decades and is a sign of a Jewish sense of security in this mainly non-Jewish society. An argument might be made that this tradition of public self-deprecation by Jews has played an important

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part in defusing whatever hostility there is to Jews in America.

I'm not sure it is the case that most Christians are "too polite" to say anything about Jews behaving badly. Most Christians don't think very much about Jews. It is possible that most Christians in America don't know any Jews personally. And if some have negative thoughts about the culture-debasing influence of some Jews, it is not only politeness but intimidation that inhibits their expressing them. Nobody wants to be viewed as an anti-Semite. In my experience, Christians don't talk much about Jews, at least not outside the relatively small circle of people who take a particular interest in Jewish-Christian relations. When concern is expressed, it is usually in the form of puzzlement that so many Jews are non-religious or stridently anti-religious.

That mix of concern and puzzlement was pronounced in events surrounding *The Passion*. On this score, there have been other rough spots in the past and will no doubt be more. While Rabbi Lapin's reproach of offending and determinedly offensive Jews is no doubt warranted, I suspect that the usually humorous, if unflattering, depiction of Jews in popular entertainment contributes to making ours a society so friendly to Jews. Against the marginal anti-Semites of today and the ravings of *Mein Kampf*, most people, if they think about it at all, probably think, "If they take such delight in making fun of themselves, they can't possibly be dangerous." That's not the whole of it, but I am inclined to think it is an important part of what continues to be the generally happy story of Jews and Christians in America.

FT

OUR CULTURE, COUNTER-CULTURALLY SPEAKING

Paula Fredriksen of Boston University is concerned with "the moral complexity of our civilization," which is a very good concern to have. But why am I also concerned about the opening paragraph of her long review of a book on morals in antiquity? Here it is: "Freedom, democracy, philosophy; art, education, law. Many of the ideas and ideals that define our culture and what we most value in it trace back across millennia to the civilizations of Greece and Rome. These two ancient societies constituted a fundamental stage in the historical development of the West. Later, refracted through medieval institutions, reclaimed in the Renaissance, and re-appropriated in the Enlightenment, this classical patrimony continued to exercise a decisive influence in shaping the culture and the politics of Europe."

What is missing from that is, of course, Christianity. Which seems somewhat odd in view of the fact that Fredriksen is a historian of Christianity. True, there is a passing reference to "medieval institutions"—which I suppose is intended, by a considerable stretch, to cover the history of Christendom, including Augustine, Benedict, Abelard, Anselm, Dominic, the Gregorian Reform, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, and the Puritan "errand into the wilderness" that became America. But "the ideas and ideals that define our culture and what we most value" are, at most, incidentally "refracted" through all that. Their source, reclaimed by Renaissance and Enlightenment, is ancient Greece and Rome.

The flagrant prejudice evident in this opening paragraph is carried through the thousands of words that follow. Fredriksen is not an ignorant person. How then to explain her mendacious rendering of the history of "the ideas and ideals that define our culture" except by a deep prejudice against Christianity? Of course, similarly distorted accounts can be found in many widely used textbooks. Fredriksen is to be commended for affirming, against powerfully assertive academic fashions, that there is such a thing as Western Civilization and that it is worthy of being valued. Yet her bowdlerized history of that civilization is at the root of the deepest divisions in our society.

What is called the culture war is not simply about this or that question disputed in the public square. It is most basically about the narrative of who we are. When Fredriksen says "our culture," she means the continuum from ancient Greece and Rome that modernity restored after a medieval (i.e., Christian) digression. Her culture is the culture also of many others in the academy, especially in the humanities. That culture is a counterfactual and fanciful intellectual construct. It reflects the same prejudice that rejected the mention of Christianity in the preamble to the constitution of the European Union.

In historical fact, in honest scholarship, and in popular understanding, our cultural narrative is predominantly that of Jerusalem, which in the form of Christianity, and through centuries of conflict and devotion, appropriated, transmitted, and transformed also the legacy of Greece and Rome. To speak of "our culture" without defining reference to Jerusalem—to Sinai and Calvary, to Moses and Jesus, to the permutations of Christianity and the protests against its hegemony—is to speak of a culture not recognizable to the overwhelming majority of Americans. It is not recognizable because it is false. It is, in its sedately academic way, countercultural. What is called the culture war runs very deep.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ It was far from the most important development as the Terri Schiavo case seized the nation's attention, but it should not go unremarked. There were repeated statements by the Holy See, statements by William Cardinal Keeler of the pro-life office, by the bishops conference, by numerous individual bishops, and by the bishops of Florida collectively. All spoke with one voice on the moral impermissibility of killing Ms. Schiavo by removing her food and hydration. And then there was the statement by Bishop Robert N. Lynch, former general secretary of the bishops conference and bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, where Ms. Schiavo's family lives. Bishop Lynch said, "At the end of the day (the judicial, legislative days) the decision to remove Terri's artificial feeding tube will be that of her husband, Michael." Of course, it is precisely this that the national protest and the extraordinary actions by Congress and the president aimed to prevent. There is no way of reading Bishop Lynch's statement without concluding that he thinks the final decision *should* have been made by Michael Schiavo, who for years aggressively pursued his goal of making his wife dead. Compounding the inexplicability of his statement, Bishop Lynch compares the circumstance to one in which "families of the person *in extremis* agree that it is time to allow the Lord to call a loved one to Himself, feeling that they have done all they possibly might to provide alternatives to death, every possible treatment protocol which might be helpful has been attempted." Anyone who has paid even cursory attention to the Schiavo case, and it seems the whole world paid more than cursory attention, knows that no part of that description applies to Ms. Schiavo's circumstance. Bishop Lynch proposes "a single focus of achieving the best result for Terri." The best result for Terri, we are given to understand, is that she should be dead. This is her own bishop speaking. How could the bishop be so astonishingly ignorant of her circumstance? Could it be anything other than willful ignorance, which entails grave moral culpability? I am only asking questions, but they are questions that his fellow bishops should be asking of Bishop Lynch. What is not a question but is an indisputable fact is that the bishop has—whatever his intention—publicly rejected the Church's clear teaching on the care of the disabled and has lent the authority of his office to those whose undeniable purpose is to kill Ms. Schiavo. To my knowledge, no bishop or other church authority has publicly admonished Bishop Lynch for his very public offense. After the recent sex abuse scandals, there was much talk about the need for "fraternal correction" among bishops. Was it just talk? Again, I am only asking.

■ Contributions to deep moral reflection on the Terri Schiavo ordeal came from many quarters. Herewith excerpts from *Salon*'s interview with Jesuit Father John Paris, Walsh Professor of Bioethics at Boston College. *Salon* asks what the Schiavo case is really about. Paris: "The power of the Christian right. This case has nothing to do with the legal issues involving a feeding tube." *Salon*: Are there any extenuating circumstances? Paris: "The law is clear, the medicine is clear, the ethics is clear." *Salon* asks how Fr. Paris squares his view with the Pope's statement that denying food and water is euthanasia by omission? Paris: "There are some radical right-to-lifers there [in the Vatican], and they got that statement out. . . . His comment wasn't doctrinal statement, it wasn't an encyclical, it wasn't a papal pronouncement. It was a speech at a meeting of right-to-lifers." Fr. Paris admits to being surprised by the response to the Schiavo case. "I hadn't anticipated the power of the Christian right. They elected him [George W. Bush], and now he dances." Boston College is a school "in the Jesuit tradition."

■ Criticizing Robert Sloan's leadership, a former president of Baylor says, "Faculty are not here to engage in religiosity. They're here to teach algebra, political science, the best way they know how, which is to me the Christian way to do it." This is the "two truths" heresy with which Sloan, and other presidents of Christian colleges, have had to contend. There is the truth of fact and science, on the one hand, and the truth of Christian faith, on the other. Ne'er the twain shall meet, except at the level of subjective intentionality. Baylor is caught up in Texas Baptist politics but also, writes Robert Benne, in "the question of Baptist identity." "Nonfundamentalist Baptists are in a quandary about who they are today. . . . The Sloan administration has proposed a view of Baptists as orthodox, doctrinal, evangelical, ecumenical, and in the Free Church tradition. It affirms that Christianity has intellectual content that should be shared by all Christians, and that provides the substance for serious faith/learning encounter. It has bolstered the university by inviting Christians from the great magisterial traditions—Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran—to enrich the rather thin Baptist intellectual tradition. It has hired and nurtured Baptists who are open to this kind of ecumenicity." Some might question whether the "great magisterial traditions" of Lutheranism and Calvinism survive today outside distinctly unecumenical groups such as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church or the

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Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. But Benne is right that scholars formed in those traditions do have, along with Catholics, intellectual resources for joining faith and reason that are largely absent from the Baptist tradition of anti-traditionalism and, too often, anti-intellectualism. Sloan's candid acknowledgment of this Baptist intellectual deficit was no doubt a factor in his troubled efforts to cope with Texas Baptist politics.

■ The times they are a-changin'—which is the one thing you can count on not to change. A couple of years ago, Colleen Carroll took a lot of people by surprise with her book *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy*. An engaging case study in that larger phenomenon is now on offer in Matthew Lickona's *Swimming with Scapulars: True Confessions of a Young Catholic* (Loyola, 278 pp., $19.95). I will not be surprised if this becomes something of a niche classic. Lickona and his wife Deirdre are graduates of Thomas Aquinas College in California and live with their four (as of this writing) children in La Mesa, California, where he is staff writer for the *San Diego Reader*, an alternative newspaper. "Alternative" is the word for the ever-ancient, ever-new way of life they are striving to live, a life of self-discipline and spiritual struggles joined to the hilarity and high adventure of Catholic fidelity. (Four days into the honeymoon they were still virgins because, being committed to Natural Family Planning, the time was not right for Deirdre.) Thomas Aquinas is among the more prominent of alternative Catholic colleges established in recent decades, and this charming and frequently crazy book serves as a report card on what such schools are producing. If the Lickonas are representative, a rigorous (they would say vigorous) orthodoxy results in a way of being Catholic that has left behind the stale liberal-vs.-conservative squabbles about what went wrong and what went right after the Second Vatican Council and has moved on to living the faith in all its fullness. Theirs is not a return to the Catholic "ghetto" or "subculture," nor are they part of an angry counter-culture. Rather, Lickona provides a delightfully high-spirited and candid account of living Catholicism as though it were true, scapulars included. The author is in lively engagement with the surrounding culture and the problems encountered by those who have chosen another way. "Let's be open and clean," he writes. "Let's drag this out into the light and discuss. Let's not be shocked and resentful; let's love the lonely. Perhaps, coming from a fanatic, the message of God's love will regain some of its wonderful outrageousness. 'Listen. I have a secret. I eat God, and I have His life in me. It's the best thing in the world; it leads to everlasting life. But first, you have to die to yourself.'" There is a good deal of Matthew Lickona's self in *Swimming with Scapulars*, but with the guidance of St. Augustine, C.S. Lewis, and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* a new man is manifestly a-borning. This book may not be a portent of the Catholic future, but it is a compelling account of the Catholic present as experienced by a growing number of young people who have dared to accept Christ's invitation to "put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." In catching, Matthew Lickona has been caught, and with winsome enthusiasm he recommends the experiment to others. The times they are a-changin'.

■ Stanley Milgram died—writes John Darley, professor of psychology at Princeton—"leaving us with the knowledge that evil is not inherent in all of us, yet showing us how evil can be performed by essentially ordinary people." Well, yes and no. Stanley Milgram, it may be remembered, was a man famous, or infamous, for his "obedience studies" conducted at Yale in the 1960s. He recruited people from New Haven who would serve as "teachers" in administering a test to "learners." When the learners made a mistake, the teachers would, at Milgram's orders, administer an electrical shock. What the teachers did not know is that learners were actors who would fake severe pain, sometimes crying out for mercy. The key thing is that the teachers, when told to do so, would administer more and more severe shocks, even to the point of apparently endangering the lives of the actor-learners. Milgram described the results in a memo to the National Science Foundation: "In a naïve moment some time ago, I once wondered whether in all of the United States a vicious government could find enough moral imbeciles to meet the personnel requirements of a national system of death camps, of the sort that were maintained in [Nazi] Germany. I am now beginning to think that the full complement could be recruited in New Haven. A substantial proportion of people do what they are told to do, irrespective of the content of the act, and without pangs of conscience, so long as they perceive that the command comes from a legitimate authority." In his review of a new book on Milgram, *The Man Who Shocked the World* by Thomas Blass, Darley describes his own research in support of a somewhat different theory called "situationalism." The theory, which he says is currently dominant, "holds that the major determinant of a person's actions is construction and internal representation of the meaning of the situation." He admits that such a statement may seem "obvious," and it does. He cites an experiment in which a research subject would stay in a room filling with acrid smoke, if two others also stayed. This presumably demonstrates a propensity to

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conform. In another experiment, a real student will conform by giving a wrong measurement of a line, if play-acting students also do. "Half a dozen of these others, whom the subject perceived to be equally naïve subjects, one by one all gave an obviously false answer to a simple perceptual question, which involved the length of a line that they could all see. The naïve subject often conformed." I suppose some subjects were cowardly conformists, but others, seeing apparently bright students giving an apparently wrong answer, may have figured that the others knew something that they didn't. As a theory, "situationalism," like so many academic theories, seems embarrassingly self-evident. Who does not, in ways both worthy and ignoble, tailor his actions in ways appropriate to what he perceives to be his situation? That is true of both the craven and the heroic. That there are more cowards than heroes does not come as news. Which brings us back to "the knowledge that evil is not inherent in all of us, yet evil can be performed by essentially ordinary people." Evil is not inherent in us, if by inherent one means it is intrinsic to being human. Otherwise, Adam before the fall and Christ would not be truly human. Christ, the new Adam, is more truly human by virtue of being sinless. However ethically dubious were Stanley Milgram's "obedience studies," and however he may have over-dramatized the results by invoking the Holocaust, he discovered nothing that should surprise those who are aware of Original Sin, which is aptly described as the only Christian doctrine that can be proven beyond reasonable doubt. At the time and still today, Milgram's work was thought to be so controversial, in large part, because it offended against the delusion of the morally innocent and self-directed rational self. To the extent that he exposed that delusion, he rendered a service.

■ "Civic friendship." What a beautiful idea, but in our rancorous political climate some might be excused for thinking it is a pipe dream. In an instructive little book published by the Acton Institute, *Trial by Fury*, by law professor (and FIRST THINGS contributor) Ronald Rychlak, applies the idea of civic friendship to tort reform. Here is how a tort system that encourages accepting responsibility in the context of community relations ought to work: "Those who have been harmed know that the legal system will guarantee that they are compensated, and those who have committed the harm know that society ultimately will not let them avoid responsibility. Above all those without genuine claims will know that neither will the legal system permit their compensation nor will society condone their immorality. This knowledge encourages potential litigants to resolve disputes justly and privately. The perceived superiority of courtroom justice over personal interaction (*civic friendship*) is neither part of Christian social thought, nor historically corroborated, and it is very harmful to the community and to justice itself. As the tort law system evolved over the past several decades, however, it has moved away from practices that promote community relations. Courts lowered barriers to litigation, dismantled immunities, lessened causation requirements, and increased monetary awards. These developments have transformed the legal landscape and the message that the tort system carries." Rychlak thinks tort reform is on the way and proposes some directions: "Effective tort reform, therefore, must return the system to one based on fault and causation, that holds responsible those who caused the damage, makes the injured whole, and does not impose upon the innocent. This will require careful examination of the current incentives that exist to the filing of lawsuits, especially class action lawsuits. Among the first matters to be considered would be the restoration of some form of immunities to entities that are today held responsible for actions that are outside of their scope of responsibilities. At the very least, the concept of awarding punitive damages against charities and governmental agencies must be revisited. Judges and juries also need to have more structured guidance regarding punitive damages in all cases. A *loser pays* system for attorney fees would also go a long way toward easing the fear currently felt by so many individuals and entities in the society." Civic friendship. An idea that is not only beautiful but, if we have the will and the wit for it, maybe possible.

■ At Boston College in March, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick of Washington, D.C., once again addressed the question of Catholics in public life. In the course of his remarks, he offers an interesting account of his much-controverted use, at the June 2004 meeting of the American bishops, of then-Cardinal Ratzinger's communication on exclusion from communion. He adds, "This, of course, did not stop the media critics on the extremes who continued their tactics of promoting division in the Church." Without knowing who he has in mind, I really do not believe that, for instance, *Commonweal* and the *Wanderer* are out to divide the Church. Cardinal McCarrick is on more solid ground when he notes that the larger question is the proper disposition in receiving the Blessed Sacrament: "This is not only for politicians but for all of us. Many of us believe that the reception of the Eucharist in our churches has become something of a habitual practice and without the kind of prayerful preparation that it

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always needs to have. The way that it is organized in large churches, which tend to empty out row after row to approach the altar, promotes this kind of communion without thought or without the necessary preparation." On the specific question of politicians who publicly and persistently oppose Catholic teaching on the culture of life, it would be good if the bishops could achieve greater clarity and unity in pastoral practice before the next electoral cycle is in full swing. One hopes that those bishops who in 2004 said they needed time to pastorally engage offending politicians have been energetically applying themselves to such engagement. The excuse is still heard that such engagement would appear to be "partisan" because it would likely involve more Democrats than Republicans. To which it needs only to be observed that the parties and the candidates are responsible for their positions, as the bishops are responsible for firmly and persuasively asserting the teaching of the Church.

■ Some Muslims in the United States have suggested that apostasy from Islam should be discouraged by law. Syed Mumtaz Ali, president of the Canadian Society of Muslims, argues that Canada's multicultural policy of granting group rights should allow Muslims to punish apostasy and blasphemy in their communities. In deference to non-Muslim sensibilities, Mumtaz adds that this need not necessarily entail enforcing the "Islamic punishment" of death for such crimes. In fact, Muslims who commit apostasy, mainly by conversion to Christianity, are very few in number. According to the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, "Christians and Muslims both send the bulk of their missionaries to people of their own faiths. In this sense, the foreign missionary enterprise of the world's two largest religions is largely an attempt to renew their own traditions." As, we may hope, Canadians will maintain their tradition of taking a dim view of people who kill or otherwise punish people for exercising religious freedom or saying uncomplimentary things about Islam.

■ Of the thousands of books that deserve a review, relatively few get reviewed here or elsewhere. Sometimes we plan a review but, for one reason or another, it doesn't pan out. Happily, that can be partially remedied by borrowing, as I here borrow from Daniel J. Mahoney's excellent review of Samuel Gregg's *On Ordered Liberty: A Treatise on the Free Society*. Writing in the *Journal of Markets & Morality*, Mahoney notes: "*On Ordered Liberty* exposes the radical limitations of utilitarian thinking and shows that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in the philosophy of academic liberalism. It also provides a much-needed alternative to libertarian dogmatism in all its forms. It shows that there is nothing authentically liberal about an approach that fails to distinguish between better and worse preferences and that refuses to acknowledge any rationally discernable distinction between the noble and the base. In truth, Gregg's real target is not utilitarianism, as he declares, but rather the 'contractualism' that is at the heart of post-Hobbesian political thought. Social contract theorizing denies the naturalness of the political community and affirms that those authoritative institutions (family, church, and other intermediate institutions) that civilize and socialize human beings lack legitimacy because they limit the free choices of autonomous human beings. Defenders of the free society must finally choose between the contractualist and conventionalist denial of the Good and a more truthful and salutary concept of human freedom. They must choose between an older liberalism that freely acknowledged the dependence of modern freedom on premodern moral capital and a liberty that refuses to bow even before the requirements of Truth. It is to Samuel Gregg's great credit that his book so thoughtfully clarifies this inescapable battle for the heart and soul of liberalism."

■ People of a delicate sensibility were made uneasy by Terri Schiavo's being forced to die of hunger and thirst. Hurrying to the aid of the morally scrupulous, the *New York Times* offered the assurance of Dr. Sean Morrison of Mount Sinai School of Medicine that such a death is very quiet, very dignified, and very gentle. "Experts," the *Washington Post* reported, "are virtually unanimous in saying that it does not appear to be painful." And the *Los Angeles Times* offered the comforting information that "going without food and water in the last days of life is as natural as death itself" and that "contrary to the visceral fears of humans, death by starvation is the norm in nature—and the body is prepared for it." Christopher Levenick of the American Enterprise Institute was among the many who were much relieved. He suggests that Governor Jeb Bush should introduce legislation requiring that the State of Florida use forced starvation as the preferred method of execution for its 368 inmates on death row. The objection might be raised that we do not know whether Terri Schiavo knew what was being done to her, while a prisoner would certainly know. To that objection, Levenick responds, "It is the tranquility of the death itself that should concern us. Conscious or not, if deprived of food and drink, a human being will enter into a uremic coma, chemical imbalances in the brain will induce a sedative-like effect, and the heart will, in due course, stop beating." The experts are virtually unanimous in saying it is so.

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■ Easy virtue takes many forms. Staying at a hotel down in Washington, I was taken with a card prominently displayed by the management: "Being mindful of the environment and ultimately the world is the best way to serve our guests." The service may be shabby, the carpet soiled, and the air-conditioner making loud rattling noises, but what is that in comparison with knowing that the management is mindful of the environment and ultimately the world? "Kimpton Hotels helps to keep our planet tranquil by changing bath linens by request only." Dirty towels mean a tranquil planet. It seems a small price to pay. And it saves the hotel a lot of money on laundering. Then there is this by Danny Seo (who is described as Kimpton Hotel's "eco-stylist"): "Small choices can really add up. Kimpton makes it easy for their guests to make a difference." Ah, to go to sleep, the noisy air-conditioner notwithstanding, and know that your life has made a difference. And to provide me with such moral satisfaction my hosts were billed only $425 per night. At least in that respect it does not fall under Dietrich Bonhoeffer's strictures against cheap grace.

■ More than a few readers were taken aback upon reading an interview in the *National Catholic Reporter* with Roger Cardinal Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles. He is reported to have said, "Any priest coming in, knows that if he confesses to a reportable crime I have to report it." Did he mean he would violate the confessional seal? We asked the cardinal, and he offers this clarification: "Please be assured that I was definitely *not* referring to the Sacrament of Reconciliation by using the word 'confesses.' Rather, I should have said that 'Any priest coming in, knows that if he *admits* to a reportable crime I have to report it.' This presumes that the priest is making this admission for the very first time to a mandated reporter under California law. Since January 1, 1997, all clergy in the State of California became mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. The Sacramental Seal of Confession is total and absolute, and no priest or bishop who learns of a reportable crime may pass that information on to anyone in any circumstances whatsoever. The priest or bishop could urge the penitent to take the reportable crime to the public forum, but he can never divulge that information learned in Confession to anyone." Cardinal Mahony's clarification is most welcome.

■ "Atheist psychiatrist argues that gays can change." That's the subhead of a *Christianity Today* interview with Robert Spitzer, professor of psychiatry at Columbia University. It is no criticism of *Christianity Today* to note that his being an atheist is viewed as a plus. It is to say, "Hey, it's not just we Christians who think this way." The Spitzer story is indeed interesting. Back in 1973 he was instrumental in having the American Psychiatric Association declare that homosexuality is not a clinical disorder. Thirty years later, after extensive research with homosexuals who had undergone reparative therapy (the preferred term now is "reorientation therapy"), he concluded that it was about as effective as most therapies. A storm ensued when he published his findings in the October 2003 issue of *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. Spitzer thinks his position is less controversial today. Asked if he is planning a follow-up study, he said, "No. I feel a little battle fatigue. But also I'm not sure what the study would be. Some people have said, 'Follow these people, interview them five years later, see how many of them have switched back,' since it's well known that some ex-gays give it up. But suppose you found that 5 percent or 10 percent did switch back. I mean, so what? You'd find the same thing if you followed people who had treatment for drug addiction. Some are going to relapse." That sounds about right.

■ The sentiments are drearily conventional. Hendrik Hertzberg writes in the *New Yorker*, "Terri Schiavo's life, as distinct from the life of her unsentient organs, ended fifteen years ago." The whole fuss was organized by Republican politicians pandering to extremists, he explains. "Terri Schiavo has become a metaphor in the religio-cultural struggle over abortion." And then the claim that "the fervor of Terri's Christianist 'supporters' was motivated by dogmas unrelated to her or her rights." The use of "Christianist" is interesting. I have seen it before here and there. I believe the unfortunate Gore Vidal is fond of the term. But I have not seen it in an approximately mainstream publication such as the *New Yorker*. I suppose it is thought imprudent to launch an assault on "Christians" in a country where 80 percent of the people identify themselves as such. Mr. Hertzberg invites Christians to separate themselves from the Christianists. The word has a certain resonance with the word "Communist." I do hope this does not portend an interreligious form of McCarthyism.

■ There are, according to a reader with too much time on his hands, hundreds of books for dummies. *Catholicism for Dummies* is ranked the number 4 bestseller, *The Bible for Dummies* number 48, *Buddhism for Dummies* number 78, and *Religion for Dummies* number 140. There are also Labradors, basketball, football, pugs, and bookkeeping—all for dummies. *Sex for Dummies* is way down the list at number 194. About some things people apparently do not want to admit that they don't know.

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■ It is true that we have not paid attention to John Cornwell's latest book, *The Pontiff in Winter: Triumph and Conflict in the Reign of John Paul II*, and it is not an adequate excuse that almost nobody else has either. Cornwell is author of *Hitler's Pope*, the now notorious book-length slander of Pius XII. He doesn't like John Paul II any better. Not that he knows much about him. In a chapter titled "Close Encounters," he is reduced to quoting people who have met the pope and had critical things to say about him. Reduced further, he cites, apparently as evidence, dreams that novelist Graham Greene once said he had. Mr. Greene apparently did not like the pope either. Cornwell here repeats charges that he had retracted in the February 2001 issue of FIRST THINGS and is sharply critical of the pro-papal cabal he calls "the FIRST THINGS coterie." Reflective of his penchant for painstaking accuracy, he says FIRST THINGS is "a reactionary Catholic quarterly." As one commentator observes, "He is wrong on all three scores." At least we might all agree that FIRST THINGS is a monthly. I expect the reason the book promptly sank without a trace is that even editors otherwise sympathetic to Cornwell's viewpoint found somewhat distasteful the mix of bile and ignorance in beating up on an old man, and then giving him a few extra kicks for good measure. And now I am possibly guilty of paying more attention than the book deserves.

■ Seventeen theological heavyweights in ELCA Lutheranism have issued a statement calling for the rejection of a task force's recommendation of what is, in effect, a local option with respect to ordaining those living in a same-sex relationship and the blessing of same-sex unions. "The proposed shift of matters of such enormous import from the national to the local levels will have two adverse consequences," the statement says. First, "the structural dissolution of the ELCA as it currently exists," and, second, "creation of intense division and disunity at the local level, thus effectively undermining [in the words of the task-force report] 'ways to live together faithfully in the midst of our disagreements.'" In preparation for the August churchwide assembly in Orlando, Florida, the sixty-five synods of the ELCA are being asked to join in rejecting the task force report. The signers of the statement include figures of significant theological influence in Lutheranism and far beyond, such as George W. Forell, Robert Jenson, Carl Braaten, Roy A. Harrisville, Gerhard Forde, Hans Hillerbrand, James Crumley, Jr., and William Lazareth. While they were the theological fathers of generations of Lutheran leaders, their influence with younger clergy and laity is not clear. Opponents of the task force proposals are planning a large meeting in September. Depending on the action of the Orlando assembly, plans for a nongeographical dissenting synod or even the launching of a new church body will be on the agenda.

■ Forty years ago it was the Netherlands and Quebec that went with astonishing rapidity from what seemed to be deeply Christian cultures to a pervasive secularism. Now many fear that is happening in Ireland. In a national radio address, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin addressed the problem in a lecture on "The Christian Presence in the Pluralist Public Square." He quotes President Vaclav Havel speaking to a 2000 meeting of the World Bank in Prague: "Why did someone in long bygone times engage in the construction of such costly edifices which appear to be of so little use by today's standards? One possible explanation is that there were periods in history when material gain was not the highest value in human life and when humankind knew that there were mysteries they would never understand and before which they could only stand in humble amazement and perhaps project that amazement into structures whose spires point upward. Upward in order that they might be seen from far and wide. Upward to that which is beyond our sight, that which by its mere silent existence appears to preclude for humanity any right to treat the world as an endless source of short-term profit and which calls for solidarity with all those who dwell under its mysterious vault." The Christian voice in the public square cannot be limited to that of the Church hierarchy. "If the Catholic voice is merely the voice of the hierarchy—as eloquent and holy as they might be—the game is up. If the hierarchy is neither eloquent nor holy, the game will not even get started." Martin emphasizes that the public engagement of the Church must be clearly grounded in devotion to Jesus Christ and his continuing work of salvation, and he concludes with this: "Jesus teaches with authority. But that is not a license for his disciples to be authoritarian. The Church's authority is in the authority of its teaching. Tomorrow's Church will be a more humble, listening Church which realizes that the fundamental obedience is obedience of the Church itself to the word of God, which alone has the strength to change the world according to God's plan. The Church will be more a pilgrim Church, which journeys with all those of good will who work for goodness and honesty and who genuinely seek the truth. An inquiring, caring public square will be enriched by the presence of inquiring, caring Christians who bring that same message that brought enrichment to the public squares and dust tracks of Palestine over 2,000 years ago by Jesus the Nazarene who revealed the strength of God by humbling himself."

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■ Lee Edwards has done many books on conservatism in the United States, and the other day there crossed my desk his *A Brief History of the Modern American Conservative Movement*. I am not a gatekeeper of the conservative movement—not even an assistant deputy to the deputy assistant gatekeeper. Who is and who is not a conservative is a question that has never much interested me. I suppose I got my fill of disputes over ideological definitions an eon ago when I was generally viewed as being on the Left. It would seem that any movement of consequence, or with ambitions to be of consequence, has to draw lines indicating who is in and who is out, who belongs and who doesn't belong, who is "us" and who is "them." It is more or less inevitable, not only in politics but between philosophical and theological schools of thought, and, no doubt, in the corporate strategies of the world of business. For the conservative movement, William F. Buckley, Jr., has been the chief gatekeeper and rule-maker since the days when, in the view of its detractors, conservatism was not a movement but only an irritable gesture. Buckley succeeded in excommunicating, so to speak, sundry screwballs and anti-Semites from the movement. I have tried to keep my distance from ideological infighting among conservatives, although oldtimers may remember that nasty brouhaha in which I was embroiled with the paleoconservatives of the Rockford Institute and *Chronicles* magazine back in 1989. In truth, there seems to be comparatively little infighting among conservatives these days. The "modern conservative movement," if movement is still the right word, is a many-splendored thing of ingredients moral, social, religious, patriotic, entrepreneurial, and populist. Nobody seems much interested in excluding anyone. That is odd in a way, since it is often assumed that movements are cohesive in opposition but splinter in their success. And over the past half century, the conservative movement is, all in all, a success story. Of course one immediately adds that there is so much more to be done, but that is always the case. The reality is, however, that people under thirty today cannot remember when "conservative" was equated with "Neanderthal" (although the equation may still be in fashion on more stridently liberal campuses). Once called "the stupid party," conservatism has produced almost every fresh and promising idea in culture and politics over the last twenty years. I saw the other day where Frank Rich of the *New York Times* was bemoaning this year's Super Bowl entertainment and remembering the daring times when Janet Jackson's nipple was exposed, which apparently he found quite exciting. The alternative to conservatism is reduced to this. As it is said, everything changes except the avant garde. I'm told the Democratic response to the State of the Union address included a call for a Marshall Plan for America. What next? Women's suffrage? Such were random thoughts prompted by Lee Edwards' *Brief History*. Offering the pleasures of nostalgia for older readers and the benefits of instruction for younger, it is worth a look.

■ In the annals of historical progress one should enter a quite new phenomenon: child soldiers. According to a new book by P.W. Singer, *Children at War*, about 10 percent of soldiers currently involved in combat are children—children, as in twelve-year-olds or even five-year-olds. It used to be that soldiers had to be strong, capable of mastering lances, swords, and bayonets. Now with an AK-47 that costs less than the equivalent of ten U.S. dollars and can be mastered in a few minutes, a ten-year-old kid can blow away dozens of people. Apart from changed technology, former rules of war prohibiting child soldiers have been abandoned in conflicts in Africa and Southeast Asia involving the rival gangs sometimes called governments. Of course children lose limbs in battle and, since children's limbs grow faster than their surrounding tissue, the kids need frequent additional amputations and the fitting of new prosthetic devices, although the devices are almost never available. Singer says children often have a hard time readjusting to civilian life when peace breaks out, having spent their childhood butchering their neighbors. You may wonder what five-year-olds can do for an army. It turns out that they're great for minesweeping and are promised candy if they get back. There is an organization called the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. It spends much of its energy protesting the U.S. policy of permitting seventeen-year-olds to enlist with the consent of their parents.

■ "Paper, procedures, people, and prayer—that's how I spend my time, and every day I wish I knew how to reverse the order." So says a bishop who is overwhelmed by the demands of paperwork and committee meetings that prevent him from getting out among the faithful and turning inward to attend to the state of his soul. He and other bishops will likely have their frustration compounded if the "National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management" has its way. That is a new organization launched by Geoffrey Boisi, a top executive at JP Morgan Chase with deep pockets and a deep commitment to getting the Church to shape up, management-wise. He brought together 170 influential Catholics at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, mostly from the corporate and financial worlds but with a smattering of left-of-center editors, academics, and activists. ("Left-of-center" here means people who think that *America*

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or *Commonweal* are the solid center.) The eighty-page report issuing from the meeting is filled with recommendations for running the Church on the model of the great success of corporate, financial, and academic leadership in America. It is emphasized that the Church in the United States employs more than a million people and has an operating budget of nearly $100 billion, and it is about time it started acting like the big business it is. Proposed are a multitude of new committees, commissions, task forces, and accountability review mechanisms, all calling for regular reports by bishops and new staffing to ensure efficiency in meeting strategic plans and corporate goals. The Wharton document is titled "Report of the Church in America." The "of" is a nice touch. The bishops' conference is treating the initiative politely, appointing a liaison committee to discuss the proposals with Mr. Boisi and his friends, who are, after all, people of great substance. It seems unlikely that much will come of the proposals but, if I'm wrong about that, my aforementioned bishop friend had better be braced to cut back drastically on the corporate inefficiencies of time spent on people and prayer.

■ If you can measure the institutional seriousness of an undertaking by the number of acronyms it accumulates, this is a very serious undertaking indeed. The lead article in *Ecumenical Trends* is titled "A Sharing in the Ecumenical Task: USCCB/BCEIA and CELAM/SECUM." As it happens, it is a fairly hopeful report on discussions between Catholics, evangelicals, Pentecostals, and others in Latin America. Such developments have been aided in no small part by "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." That's ECT to the initiated.

■ Kindly overlook the cheap shot at George W. Bush in considering Lucy Beckett's review in the *Times Literary Supplement* of the new *Cambridge Companion to Hans Urs von Balthasar* (co-edited by regular FIRST THINGS contributor Edward T. Oakes, S.J.). One of the authors in the volume writes that Balthasar maintains that "in the ideal of the organic unity and mutual permeation of State and Church in the Middle Ages there is a failure to ensure the necessary distinction between God and the world." Beckett observes: "To identify and condemn this permeation, or confusion, was the most important motive for Augustine's writing of *The City of God* in the Christian Empire of late Rome. In the world of George W. Bush, Balthasar's moment may have arrived. It is certainly a time to pay attention to 'always greater' Christian truth spoken from a rich, complex, Catholic, deeply and widely informed mind, and to understand the no more than relative and transient value of any and every human arrangement of power, or words. Among theologians, Hans Urs von Balthasar may seem like a fox among chickens, but in the last year of his life he ended the final section of his book, *My Work in Retrospect*: 'Christ sent his believers into the whole world as sheep among wolves. Before making a pact with the world, it is necessary to meditate on that comparison.'" The meditation is necessary even when, especially when, some of the sheep are engaged in the inevitably wolfish offices of temporal power.

■ The mood at the annual meeting of the Religion Newswriters Association (RNA) was grim. Despite all the media chatter about religion in the public square, especially since the 2004 election, newspapers are cutting back on religion reporting. A big study put out by the school of journalism at Northwestern University, "The Power to Grow Readership," has apparently convinced editors and publishers that people aren't very interested in reading about religion. The folks in RNA believe they have all kinds of evidence to the contrary and are counterattacking. Says one, "We've got to find a better way to understand the impact of faith on such public issues as education, health care, the war in Iraq, and same-sex marriage." That strikes me as precisely wrong. If people want to read about all those other things, the "religion factor" inevitably appears as no more than an add-on. Jeff Sharlet, editor of *The Revealer*, an online review of religion and the press hosted by New York University, has, if I understand him, a more persuasive proposal: "Religion in the broad sense underlies, controls, permeates at least half the stories in the news, probably a lot more. . . . I want to know what the subjects of the story believed they were doing. That's what religion writing has to offer to every other aspect of journalism: the focus on belief." News reports about religion should be more about religion and less about religion's influence on something that is considered newsworthy. Of course, most reporters feel incompetent when it comes to addressing what people actually believe and do religiously, and most probably are. In addition to convincing their editors that religion matters, the members of the RNA have to demonstrate that it does. (Incidentally, when NYU was setting up its online operation, they asked whether I would mind if they called it *The Public Square*. I said I did mind. So they went with *The Revealer*, which seems a bit presumptuous, implying as it does an odd notion of revelation, but that's their problem.)

■ Moments of Monumental Obviousness are sometimes perpetrated by certifiably serious people, but

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they are nonetheless to be noted and paid the tribute of a silent pause. Edward Rothstein of the *New York Times* reviewed Robert Alter's translation with commentary of *The Five Books of Moses*. So much attention has been paid the biblical text, writes Rothstein, that "even the English language has been influenced by the glories (and errors) of the seventeenth-century King James translation."

■ The British sociologist David Martin is among my favorite thinkers, and here he is reviewing a book by two other favorites, *Bonds of Imperfection: Christian Politics Past and Present* by Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan. The problem with the O'Donovans' understanding of Christian politics, writes Martin, is that there's nothing specifically Christian about it. The O'Donovans contrast Karl Barth's understanding of the politics of the Cross, which they think necessarily issues in pacifism, and Paul Ramsey's commitment to a "realism" recognizing that human society always entails an element of force. Martin sides with Ramsey and writes: "Once accept that and it really does not matter what Christian lens you employ as the focus of argument, because you are going to end up in the same boat as everybody else: the assessment of likely scenarios within a tiny range of real options. Christian positions arrived at in this way simply cover the same spectrum as non-Christian positions, with perhaps a certain reluctance nowadays about being openly too realistic and, of course, a rejection of war for glory or the sheer hell of it. The just-war theory may have theological origins, but the arguments are entirely available to secular reason with no benefit of theology whatever." The O'Donovans, says Martin, discuss in great detail the problems of democracy, the role of countervailing powers, and related themes. "No doubt these are urgent problems for our democracy," writes Martin, "but theologically, so what?" Experiments in trying to combine realism and a specifically Christian theology of love grounded in the Cross have been mixed. "Even the Roman Church, precisely because it has historically come closest to devising a Christian polity, has had to institutionalize different levels of attainment as between God's athletes organized in self-selected communities, and the worlds of politics and of *l'homme moyen sensuel*. Setting aside the corruption that so easily besets the 'perfect society' of the athletes, the very existence of institutionalized levels of attainment witnesses to the pressure of social and political reality on Christian aspiration." Acknowledging the great contribution of Christianity to our civilization, Martin writes: "This shared moral wisdom might be rounded out by reverence for life and persons, the rejection of any idolatry of state, party or nation, the autonomy of voluntary associations, and the importance of sustained commitments (for example, in the family)—as well as justice and peace and the principle of hope. While the repertoire of Christianity, as imprinted historically in our civilization, may have shaped that civilization in the direction of these principles, none of them is logically dependent on a Christian foundation." To which I am inclined to say, so what? Since when has history been logical? More seriously, it is highly doubtful that practices based upon beliefs about, for instance, the reverence for life, the dignity of the person, and the evil of idolatry can be sustained apart from those beliefs. Apart from "the story of the world" proposed by Christianity, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make a convincing, as in logical, case for such beliefs. Witness, *inter alia*, the heroic labors of John Rawls. Kindness prevents the mention of Peter Singer. There is, I am persuaded, a great deal more Christianity in the O'Donovans' Christian politics than David Martin allows, and I am puzzled by his failure to see that.

■ Out in the Bay Area, it says here, "a new form of church is happening at Ebenezer." That would be Ebenezer Lutheran, which is "a diverse community." *Forum Letter*, from which I lift this item, wonders how diverse a community of thirty people could be. In any event, Ebenezer, led by Pastor Stacy Boorn, is "standing firmly within the Christian tradition in order to reconstruct the divine by reclaiming her feminine persona in theology, liturgy, church structure, art, language, practices, leadership, and acts of justice." Which, one might think, is an awful lot for thirty people to be doing. Ebenezer is also active ecumenically, in a manner of speaking. It is appropriating the rosary, or, to be more precise, the Goddess Rosary:

Hail Goddess full of grace.
Blessed are you and blessed are all the
fruits of your womb.
For you are the MOTHER of us all.
Hear us now and in all our needs.
Blessed be!

Well, I said "in a manner of speaking." Ebenezer has also adopted The Nazarene's Prayer as rewritten by former Catholic nun, Miriam Therese Winter: "Our Mother who is within us, we celebrate your many names. Your wisdom come, your will be done, unfolding from the depths within us" and so forth. Is it blasphemy and idolatry? But of course. Is it a good thing that over the years we have become inured to it, hardly able to muster a twitch of outrage? Probably not. Attention should be paid from time to time, if for no

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other reason than to be reminded of the multivalent thing that is religion in America, and to be alerted again to the perdurance of the temptation to worship ourselves by people who at this late date are excited about the novelty of the idea.

■ Almost everybody agreed that the 1999 book by Jesuit Father Roger Haight, *Jesus, Symbol of God*, was over the top, and apparently he intended it to be just that. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) was not amused and entered into conversation with Fr. Haight. After five years of discussion, CDF issued a "notification" that the book is heretical and Fr. Haight is not to teach Catholic theology. It is not as though Fr. Haight's book is a scholarly inquiry pressing at the edges of theological reflection. As CDF notes and the doctrine committee of the U.S. bishops conference confirms, the book frontally challenges such core teachings as the divinity of Jesus, the reality of the Trinity, the salvific nature of Jesus' death and bodily resurrection, and the universality of his redemptive mission. The U.S. doctrine committee asserts: "Authentic doctrine, contained in the Scriptures and in the Apostolic Tradition and defined by the Councils of the Church, must be the explicit and unambiguous foundation not only for catechetical instruction, but also for theological teaching and inquiry.... While the theological community is not only competent but indeed obliged to address creatively and to debate strenuously theological issues that are open to authentic development, theologians are not permitted to espouse theological positions that are contrary to the teaching of Scripture and the Ecumenical Councils of the Church." The theological community, to the extent it is represented by the Catholic Theological Society of America, issued a statement deploring the CDF "notification" and worrying about its chilling effect on theological scholarship. While the statement by his academic colleagues defended Fr. Haight's competence and integrity, it conspicuously did not defend the positions espoused in *Jesus, Symbol of God*. Fr. Haight has the distinction of being one of only a handful of theologians publicly disciplined during the more than twenty-six years of John Paul II's pontificate. He is currently teaching at Union Theological Seminary, the famously liberal Protestant institution in New York City.

■ The trouble with Justice Antonin Scalia is that he thinks what he believes is true. Or so says Richard Cohen of the *Washington Post*. He cites an article in these pages in which Scalia speaks of political authority being derived from God. Writes Cohen, "It would have been one thing for Scalia to have said that the Founding Fathers probably saw things his way but it is quite another thing for him to assert a belief and call it truth." One has to wonder how many things Mr. Cohen believes that he thinks are not true. With respect to religion and the American order, Mr. Cohen has a decided view. "Government neutrality—rigorous secularism—is the way to go." Rigorous secularism is neutrality? I prefer to think that Richard Cohen does not believe that, but then, what I prefer to think may not be true.

■ It's been a while since I've referred to the Industrial Areas Foundation. The reason is that there doesn't seem to be much new on that front. IAF was founded a half century ago by Saul Alinsky, who died in 1967. He was an old leftie who spotted the potential of churches, and especially the Catholic Church, for promoting radical causes. Today IAF is the force behind fifty-five affiliates, such as South Bronx Churches and Baltimoreans United In Leadership Development, with a major agitational effort among Hispanics in the Southwest. IAF says its "primary purpose is power" and its "chief product is social change." Keeping the faith with Saul Alinsky, organizers unabashedly exploit anger and resentment to generate confrontation and division in the service of radical change. Training courses aim at immunizing activists against the seductive language of temperance and reconciliation that is endemic to Christianity. Predictably, IAF generates a great deal of anger and resentment among people who resist having their churches recruited to the cause of generating anger and resentment. A common complaint is that monies from an annual collection of the bishops conference, the Campaign for Human Development, frequently find their way to IAF activities. As I have mentioned before, I have had first-hand experience with IAF projects over the years and know of cases in which they have been a part of achieving change for the better—in improving housing for the poor, for instance. But even good causes are used to serve other ends. As IAF says, its primary purpose is power, and it boasts of being none too scrupulous about how that purpose is served. Alinsky exulted in the ruthlessness of the amoral maxims—since radicalism is its own morality—summarized in his book *Rules for Radicals*. An epigraph to the book, written by Alinsky, reflects at least part of the operative philosophy: "Lest we forget at least an over-the-shoulder acknowledgment to the very first radical: from all our legends, mythology, and history (and who is to know where mythology leaves off and history begins—or which is which), the first radical known to man who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his own kingdom—Lucifer."

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Christians, one should like to think, are less admiring of Lucifer's achievement.

■ Correction: In the April issue, Sayyid Qutb, who was executed in Egypt under Nasser, was identified as the founding father of the Muslim Brotherhood. Hassan al-Banna founded the Brotherhood in 1928. Qutb authored *Milestones* in which he propounded an extreme version of Islamic jihad.

■ I am accused of insufferable elitism and manipulation for having written in a promotional letter that FIRST THINGS is published for a self-selecting audience of possibly no more than 75,000 subscribers. "Yes, I know," writes this outraged gentleman, "that this is a marketer's ploy, meant to appeal to my vanity. But shame on you!" He thinks it an insult to the country to suggest that "barely one tenth of one percent" of Americans are likely FIRST THINGS readers. I do not take lightly aspersions upon my patriotism, but 75,000 subscribers would be very high for any publication requiring the level of intellectual attentiveness assumed by FIRST THINGS. For the record, however, I hereby declare that we would welcome two million subscribers—or even ten million subscribers. Toward that end, we would be glad to send a free sample copy in your name to parties who you think may be likely subscribers.

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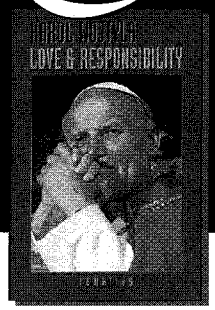

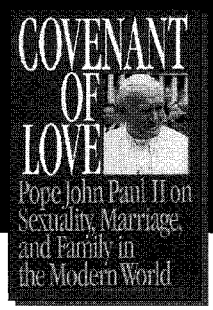

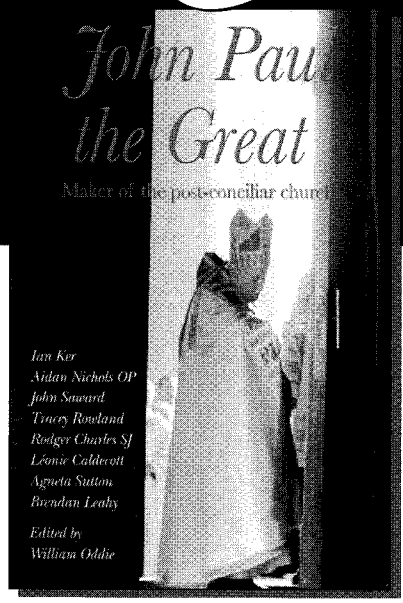

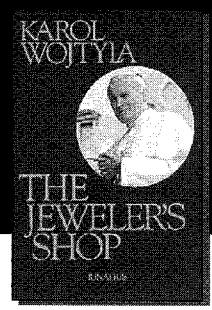

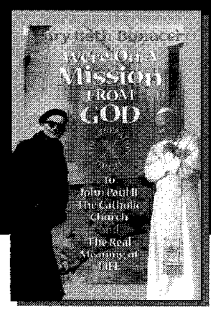

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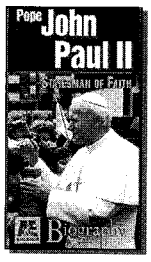

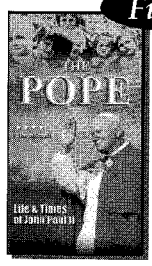

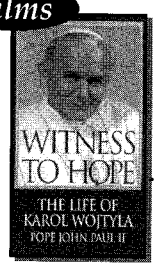

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John Paul II and the Holy Land Conference

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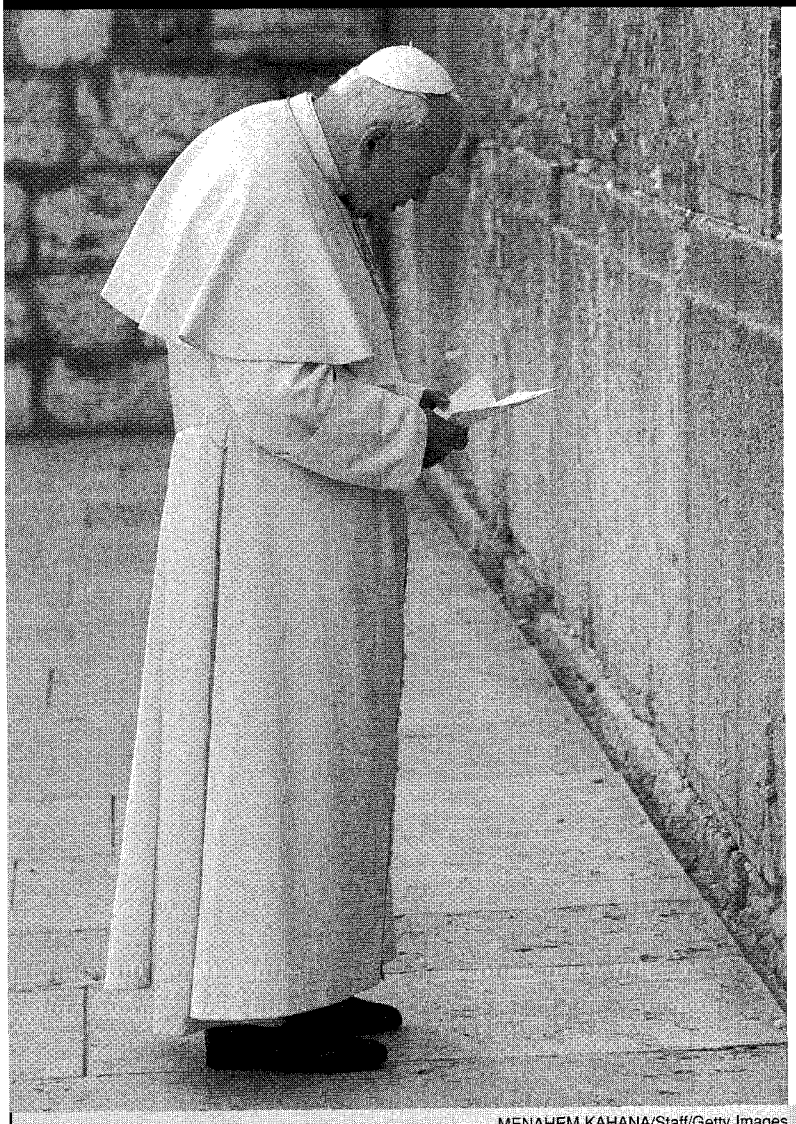

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